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The same old wish
To the same old friend.
May your success
be without measure.
George H.

Xmas.
1935

MODERN BRITISH POETRY

A CRITICAL ANTHOLOGY

(Revised and Enlarged Edition)

EDITED BY

LOUIS UNTERMEYER

Editor of *This Singing World, Modern American Poetry,* etc.
Author of *Challenge, Roast Leviathan,* etc.

New York
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It should be stated at the outset that, in spite of its inclusiveness, this compilation is far from a complete summary. No anthology, it might be added in extenuation, can hope to be. Nor should it. The duty of the anthologist (at least as far as one editor sees it) is to whet the reader's appetite, not to satisfy it. Such a collection as this, if its purpose is successful, should stimulate the reader's interest and excite him to a closer inspection of the poet's own volumes. Thus the following pages pretend to be nothing more than a critical introduction, attempting to chart various movements and tendencies with certain outstanding personalities.

For the greatest help in the preparation of this volume, thanks must be given to most of the living poets represented here. In the majority of instances, they themselves have furnished not only invaluable data but have assisted the editor in the choice of selections, so that this gathering is, to a great extent, a record of their own taste as well as his.

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MODERN BRITISH POETRY

PREFACE

Nothing is more difficult to define than the limits of a literary period. And when that fluctuating division of time is designated "modern," the vagueness of its outlines grow mistier than ever. But a limit must be fixed, and unless the editor is arbitrary (and what anthologist is not?) he is lost. In preparing this collection, the year 1840 has been chosen as a hard and fast boundary; any poet born before that date has been ruthlessly though, in many cases, regretfully omitted.

Why, it may be inquired, 1840? Firstly, because this date has the advantage of being neither too close to nor too distant from our own times. Given such a perspective (and it must be borne in mind that the work of those poets born in the 1840's dates from about 1870), we are in a far better position to appraise the achievements of this generation's predecessors. We have, thus, a background for the work of the contemporaries on whom the chief emphasis has been placed. But there is, in addition, a particular reason why the year 1840 was chosen as the dividing-line: in that year, Thomas Hardy, "the grand old man" beloved by the writers of two continents and three generations, was born. And, since contemporaneous poetry in England reflects his influence so keenly, an anthology of modern verse which did not include him would be scarcely representative. The most recent of the Georgians, with their cry of "back to the countryside," as well as the latest sardonic realist owe more than they know to the dynamic force and the power of condensation in Hardy's poems, plays, and novels.

But I am proceeding too rapidly. Within the larger curve traced in this volume, there are the records of various conflicting tendencies, shifting actions and reactions. In general—if I may be permitted a further arbitrary grouping—these smaller movements may be classified as (1) The end of Victorianism and the growth of a purely decorative art, (2) The rise and decline of the æsthetic philosophy, (3) The muscular influence of Henley, (4) The Celtic revival in Ireland, (5) Rudyard Kipling and the ascendancy of mechanism in art, (6) John Masefield and the return of the rhymed narrative, (7) The war and its effects upon the Georgians, and (8) The aftermath and the new bucolic poetry. It may be interesting to follow these developments in somewhat closer detail.

THE END OF VICTORIANISM

The age commonly called Victorian came to an end in England about 1885. It was an age distinguished by many true idealists and many false ideals. It was, in spite of its notable artists, on an entirely different level from the epoch which had preceded it. Its poetry was, in the main, not universal but parochial; its romanticism was gilt and tinsel; its realism was as cheap as its showy glass pendants, red plush, parlor chromos and antimacassars. The period was full of a pessimistic resignation (the note popularized by Fitzgerald's Omar Khayyám) and a kind of negation which, refusing to see any glamour in the actual world, turned to the Middle Ages, to King Arthur, to the legend of Troy—to the suave surroundings of a dream-world instead of the hard contours of actual experience.

At its worst, it was a period of smugness, of placid and pious sentimentality—epitomized by the rhymed sermons

of Martin Farquhar Tupper, whose *Proverbial Philosophy* was devoured, with all its cloying and indigestible sweet-meats, by tens of thousands. The same tendency is apparent, though far less objectionably, in the moralizing lays of Lord Thomas Macaulay, in the theatrically emotionalized verses of Robert Buchanan, Edwin Arnold and Sir Lewis Morris—even in the lesser later work of Alfred Lord Tennyson.

The poets of a generation before this time were fired with such ideas as freedom, a deep and burning awe of nature, an insatiable hunger for truth in all its forms and manifestations. The characteristic poets of the Victorian Era, says Max Plowman, "wrote under the dominance of churchliness, of 'sweetness and light,' and a thousand lesser theories that have not truth but comfort for their end."

The revolt against this and the tawdriness of the period had already begun; the best of Victorianism can be found not in men who were typically Victorian, but in pioneers like Browning and spirits like Swinburne, Rossetti, William Morris, who were completely out of sympathy with their time.

But it was Oscar Wilde who led the men of the now famous 'nineties toward an æsthetic freedom, to champion a beauty whose existence was its "own excuse for being." Wilde's was, in the most outspoken manner, the first use of æstheticism as a slogan; the battle-cry of the group was actually the now outworn but then revolutionary "Art for Art's sake"! And, so sick were people of the shoddy ornaments and drab ugliness of the immediate past, that the slogan won. At least, temporarily.

THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE ÆSTHETIC PHILOSOPHY

The Yellow Book, the organ of a group of young writers and artists, appeared (1894-97), representing a reasoned and intellectual reaction, mainly suggested and influenced by the French. The group of contributors was a peculiarly mixed one with only one thing in common. And that was a conscious effort to repudiate the sugary airs and prim romantics of the Victorian Era.

Almost the first act of the "new" men was to rouse and outrage their immediate predecessors. This end-of-the-century desire to shock, which was so strong and natural an impulse, still has a place of its own—especially as an antidote, a harsh corrective. Mid-Victorian propriety and self-satisfaction crumbled under the swift and energetic audacities of the sensational younger authors and artists. The old walls fell; the public, once so apathetic to *belles lettres,* was more than attentive to every phase of literary experimentation. The last decade of the nineteenth century was so tolerant of novelty in art and ideas, that it would seem, says Holbrook Jackson in his penetrative summary, *The Eighteen-Nineties,* "as though the declining century wished to make amends for several decades of artistic monotony. It may indeed be something more than a coincidence that placed this decade at the close of a century, and *fin de siècle* may have been at once a swan song and a death-bed repentance."

But later on, the movement (if such it may be called), surfeited with its own excesses, fell into the mere poses of revolt; it degenerated into a half-hearted defense of artificialities.

It scarcely needed W. S. Gilbert (in *Patience*) or Robert Hichens (in *The Green Carnation*) to satirize its distorted attitudinizing. It strained itself to death;

it became its own burlesque of the bizarre, an extravaganza of extravagance. "The period" (I am again quoting Holbrook Jackson) "was as certainly a period of decadence as it was a period of renaissance. The decadence was to be seen in a perverse and finicking glorification of the fine arts and mere artistic virtuosity on the one hand, and a militant commercial movement on the other. . . . The eroticism which became so prevalent in the verse of many of the younger poets was minor because it was little more than a pose—not because it was erotic. . . . It was a passing mood which gave the poetry of the hour a hothouse fragrance; a perfume faint, yet unmistakable and strange."

But most of the elegant and disillusioned young men overshot their mark. Mere vulgar health reasserted itself; an inherent though long repressed vitality sought new channels. Arthur Symons deserted his hectic Muse, Richard Le Gallienne abandoned his preciosity, and the group began to disintegrate. The æsthetic philosophy was wearing thin; it had already begun to fray and reveal its essential shabbiness. Wilde, himself, possessed the three things which he said the English would never forgive—youth, power and enthusiasm. But in trying to make an exclusive cult of beauty, Wilde had also tried to make it evade actuality; he urged that art should not, in any sense, be a part of life but an escape from it. "The proper school to learn art in is not Life—but Art." And in the same essay ("The Decay of Lying") he wrote, "All bad Art comes from returning to Life and Nature, and elevating them into ideals." Elsewhere he declared his motto: "The first duty in life is to be as artificial as possible. What the second duty is no one has discovered."

Such a cynical and decadent philosophy could not go

unchallenged. Its snobbish fastidiousness, its pale pretense was bound to arouse the red blood of common reality. This negative attitude received its answer in the work of that determined yea-sayer, W. E. Henley.

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

Henley repudiated this languid æstheticism; he scorned a negative art which was out of touch with the world. His was a large and sweeping affirmation. He felt that mere existence was glorious: life was coarse, difficult, often dangerous and dirty, but splendid at the heart. Art, he knew, could not be separated from the dreams and hungers of man; it could not flourish only on its own essences or technical accomplishments. To live, poetry would have to share the fears, angers, hopes and struggles of the prosaic world. And so Henley came like a salt breeze blowing through a perfumed, heavily-screened studio. He sang loudly (often, indeed, too loudly) of the joy of living and the courage of the "unconquerable soul." He was a powerful influence not only as a poet but as a critic and editor. In the latter capacity he gathered about him such men as Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, Thomas Hardy, H. G. Wells, W. B. Yeats, T. E. Brown, J. M. Barrie. None of these men were his disciples, some were much older, but none of them came into contact with him without being influenced in some way by his sharp and positive personality. A pioneer and something of a prophet, he was one of the first to champion the paintings of Whistler and to proclaim the genius of the sculptor Rodin.

If at times Henley's verse is imperialistic, over-muscular and strident, his noisy moments are redeemed not only by his delicate lyrics but by his passionate enthusiasm for nobility in whatever cause it was joined. He

loved the actual world in all its moods. Bus-drivers, hospital interiors, scrubwomen, a panting train, the squalor of London's alleys, all found a voice in his lines; and his later work contains more than a hint of the delight in science and machinery which was later to be sounded more fully in the work of Rudyard Kipling.

THE CELTIC REVIVAL AND J. M. SYNGE

In 1889, William Butler Yeats published his *Wanderings of Oisin;* in the same year Douglas Hyde, the scholar and folk-lorist, brought out his *Book of Gaelic Stories.*

The revival of Gaelic and the renascence of Irish literature may be said to date from the publication of those two books. The fundamental idea of both men and their followers was the same. It was to create a literature which would express the national consciousness of Ireland through a purely national art. They began to reflect the strange background of dreams, politics, suffering and heroism that is immortally Irish. This community of fellowship and aims is to be found in the varied but allied work of William Butler Yeats, "A. E." (George W. Russell), Moira O'Neill, Lionel Johnson, Katharine Tynan, Padraic Colum and others. The first fervor gone, a short period of dullness set in. After reanimating the old myths, surcharging the legendary heroes with a new significance, it seemed for a while that the movement would lose itself in a literary mysticism. But an increasing concern with the peasant, the migratory laborer, the tramp, followed; an interest that was something of a reaction against the influence of Yeats and his mystic otherworldliness. And, in 1904, the Celtic Revival reached its height with John Millington Synge, who was not only the greatest dramatist of the Irish Theatre, but (to quote such contrary critics as George Moore and

Harold Williams) "one of the greatest dramatists who has written in English." Synge's poetry, brusque and all too small in quantity, was a minor occupation with him and yet the quality and power of it is unmistakable. Its content is never great, but the raw vigor in it was to serve as a bold banner—a sort of a brilliant Jolly Roger—for the younger men of the following period. It was not only this dramatist's brief verses and his intensely musical prose but his sharp prefaces that were to exercise such an influence.

In the notable introduction to the *Playboy of the Western World,* Synge declared, "When I was writing *The Shadow of the Glen* some years ago, I got more aid than any learning could have given me from a chink in the floor of the old Wicklow house where I was staying that let me hear what was being said by the servant girls in the kitchen. This matter is, I think, of some importance; for in countries where the imagination of the people and the language they use, is rich and living, it is possible for a writer to be rich and copious in his words—and at the same time to give the reality which is at the root of all poetry, in a natural and comprehensive form." This quotation explains Synge's idiom, possibly the sharpest-flavored and most vivid in modern literature.

As to Synge's poetic power, it is unquestionably greatest in his plays. In *The Well of the Saints, The Playboy of the Western World* and *Riders to the Sea* there are more poignance, beauty of form and richness of language than in any piece of dramatic writing since Elizabethan times. Yeats, when he first heard Synge's early one-act play, *The Shadow of the Glen,* is said to have exclaimed "Euripides." A half year later when Synge read him *Riders to the Sea,* Yeats again confined his enthusiasm to a single word:—"Æschylus!" The years

have shown that Yeats's appreciation was not as exaggerated as many supposed.

But although Synge's poetry was not his major concern, numbering only twenty-four original pieces and eighteen translations, it has a surprising effect upon his followers. It marked a point of departure, a reaction against the too-polished and over-rhetorical verse of his immediate predecessors as well as the dehumanized mysticism of many of his associates. In that memorable preface to his *Poems* he wrote what was a manifesto and at the same time a classic *credo* for all that we call the "new" poetry. "I have often thought," it begins, "that at the side of poetic diction, which everyone condemns, modern verse contains a great deal of poetic material, using 'poetic' in the same special sense. The poetry of exaltation will be always the highest, but when men lose their poetic feeling for ordinary life and cannot write poetry of ordinary things, their exalted poetry is likely to lose its strength of exaltation in the way that men cease to build beautiful churches when they have lost happiness in building shops. . . . Even if we grant that exalted poetry can be kept successfully by itself, the strong things of life are needed in poetry also, to show that what is exalted or tender is not made by feeble blood."

RUDYARD KIPLING

New tendencies are contagious. But they also disclose themselves simultaneously in places and people where there has been no point of contact. Even before Synge published his proofs of the keen poetry in everyday life, Kipling was illuminating, in a totally different manner, the wealth of poetic material in things hitherto regarded as too commonplace for poetry. Before literary England had quite recovered from its surfeit of Victorian prig-

gishness and pre-Raphaelite delicacy, the young Kipling came out of India with high spirits and a great tide of life, sweeping all before him. An obscure Anglo-Indian journalist, the publication of his *Barrack-room Ballads* in 1892 brought him sudden notice. By 1895, he was internationally famous. Brushing over the pallid attempts to revive a precious past, he rode triumphantly on a wave of buoyant and sometimes brutal joy in the present. Kipling gloried in the material world; he did more—he glorified it. He pierced the coarse exteriors of seemingly prosaic things—things like machinery, bridge-building, cockney soldiers, slang, steam, the dirty by-products of science (witness "M'Andrews Hymn" and "The Bell Buoy")—and uncovered their hidden glamour. "Romance is gone," sighed most of his contemporaries,

> ". . . and all unseen
> Romance brought up the nine-fifteen."

That sentence (from his poem "The King") furnishes the key to his idiom; it explains how, without theories or technical innovations, the author of *The Five Nations* helped to rejuvenate English verse.

Kipling, with his perception of ordinary people in terms of ordinary life, was one of the strongest links between the Wordsworth-Browning era and the latest apostles of vigor, beginning with Masefield. There are occasional and serious defects in Kipling's work—particularly in his more facile poetry: he falls into a journalistic ease that tends to turn into jingle; he is fond of a militaristic drum-banging that is as blatant as the insularity he condemns. But a burning, if sometimes too simple faith, shines through his achievements. His best work reveals an intensity that crystallizes into beauty what was originally

tawdry, that lifts the vulgar and incidental to the place of the universal.

JOHN MASEFIELD

All art is a twofold reviving—a re-creation of subject and a reanimating of form. And poetry becomes perennially "new" by returning to the old—with a different consciousness, a greater awareness. In 1911, when art was again searching for novelty, John Masefield created something startling and new by going back to 1385 and *The Canterbury Pilgrims.* Employing both the Chaucerian model and a form similar to the practically forgotten Byronic stanza, Masefield wrote in rapid succession, *The Everlasting Mercy* (1911), *The Widow in the Bye Street* (1912), *Dauber* (1912), *The Daffodil Fields* (1913)—four astonishing rhymed narratives and four of the most remarkable poems of his generation. Expressive of every rugged phase of life, these poems, uniting old and new manners, responded to Synge's proclamation that "the strong things of life are needed in poetry also . . . and it may almost be said that before verse can be human again it must be brutal."

Masefield brought back to poetry that mixture of beauty and brutality which is its most human and enduring quality. He brought back that rich and almost vulgar vividness which is the very life-blood of Chaucer, of Shakespeare, of Burns, of Villon, of Heine—and of all those who were not only great artists but great humanists. As a purely descriptive poet, he can take his place with the masters of sea- and landscape. As an imaginative realist, he showed those artists who were stumbling from one wild eccentricity to another, that humanity itself was wilder, stranger, far more thrilling than anything in the world—or out of it. Few things in con-

temporary poetry are as powerful as the regeneration of Saul Kane (in *The Everlasting Mercy*) or the story of *Dauber,* the tale of a tragic sea-voyage and a dreaming youth who wanted to be a painter. The vigorous description of rounding Cape Horn in the latter poem is superbly done, a masterpiece in itself. Masefield's later volumes are quieter in tone, more measured in technique; there is an almost religious ring to many of his Shakespearean sonnets. But the swinging surge is there, a passionate strength that leaps through all his work from *Salt Water Ballads* (1902) to *Reynard the Fox* (1919).

THE WAR AND THE GEORGIANS

In 1914, the line of demarcation between Masefield and the younger men was not sharp. Realism was again in the ascendancy, although some of Masefield's followers spoke in accents totally unlike his, while others—especially W. W. Gibson—deserted their previous paths to pursue the trail he blazed. Gibson reinforced the renewed interest in actuality by turning from his early preoccupation with shining knights, faultless queens, ladies in distress, and all the paraphernalia of hackneyed mediæval romances, to write about ferrymen, berry-pickers, stonecutters, farmers, printers, circus-men, carpenters—dramatizing (though sometimes theatricalizing) the primitive emotions of ordinary people in *Livelihood, Daily Bread* and *Fires.* This candor had been asking new questions. It found unexpected answers in the war; repressed emotionalism discovered a new and terrible outlet.

The first volume of the biennial *Georgian Poetry* had just appeared when the war caught up the youth of England in a great gust of national fervor. Not only the young men but their seniors joined what seemed then to be "the Great Adventure," only to find that it was, as

one of them has since called it, "the Late Great Nightmare." After the early flush of romanticism had passed, the voices of bitter disillusion were heard. Not at first, for the censorship was omnipresent. But Siegfried Sassoon's fierce satires and burning denunciations could not be stilled, the mocking lines of Robert Graves began to be quoted, and Wilfred Owen's posthumous poems painted a picture the very opposite of the journalistic jingo verses which attempted to paint civilization's greatest blow in bright and cheerful colors.

Recently, in an article on a similar theme, Graves wrote: "The poetry written by actual soldiers is perhaps too familiar for discussion, but we may remind ourselves of one or two outstanding facts usually overlooked: that Rupert Brooke saw many warlike scenes but no actual fighting, that Mr. Robert Nichols, with the best of intentions, only saw three weeks' service in France and this on a quiet sector with the artillery: that of the other poets with reputations as War-poets not more than four or five (including Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen who was killed just before the Armistice, Isaac Rosenberg, Edmund Blunden and Herbert Read) bore the heat and burden of the War; and that these unanimously vilified rather than celebrated the War: and that of these only Siegfried Sassoon published his verse while the War was still on."

Rupert Brooke, the most popular of his group, remains, in most minds, as the type of romantic warrior; a symbolic figure not uncommon at the beginning of the War. But his poetry, as well as his correspondence, contains evidence that, had he survived the first few years of warfare, his verse—had he written at all—would have been akin to the unromanticized passion of those who, like Sassoon and Owen, saw the horror at close range and at

length. Even his comrade, Charles Hamilton Sorley, that marvellous boy killed at twenty, hearing the news of Brooke's death, wrote: "Rupert Brooke is far too obsessed with his own sacrifice, regarding the going to war of himself (and others) as a highly intense, remarkable and sacrificial exploit, whereas it is merely the conduct demanded of him (and others) by the turn of circumstances, where non-compliance with this demand would have made life intolerable. He has clothed his attitude in fine words: but his is, nevertheless, the sentimental attitude."

AFTERMATH

Peace brought back but few of the younger poets. The most brilliant of them, Charles Hamilton Sorley, was killed on the threshold of an indubitably great future. The career of Isaac Rosenberg, author of an amazing poetic drama, was ended almost before it had begun. Rupert Brooke died in the midst of his singing; so did Edward Thomas, Francis Ledwidge and Cameron Wilson. Wilfred Owen was struck down just as he had found his own full-throated utterance. It is impossible to calculate how much has been lost to English poetry by the death of these singers.

One after-effect is particularly noticeable. English literature suffered not only from individual losses but from general shock. This shock affected the writers of every school and diverted where it did not arrest the current of contemporary verse. It threw Masefield back to the classic drama of half a century ago; it silenced such of its War-poets who refused to continue to write about "the collective madness" and yet could think of little else. And it created the sharp division between the new group of English pastoral poets and the still younger

intellectuals. The reactions of the two contradictory movements are easy to understand. Wishing to escape the intricate urban civilization which had scarred Europe with ruins, many of the poets turned hopefully to the traditional curlew-calling, plover-haunted English countryside. The machine is a dead thing spreading death, they cried; only the soil creates. "We have had enough of destructive ingenuities; let us go back to the primal simplicities." Following, more or less unconsciously, the example of that genuinely naïf poet, W. H. Davies, a small cohort of writers began to sing exclusively about the charms of childhood, sunsets and rural delights. But where Davies's innocence is natural and deep, the simplicity of most of the pastoral Georgians is predetermined and superficial. Much of the resulting poetry is inspired by the wish to avoid past memories rather than by a spontaneous affection for the present scene; much of it, indeed, seems a sort of spiritual convalescence. In some instances, it reaches a puerile *reductio ad absurdum,* a literary affectation that leads one of these artificial shepherds to write such unconsciously comic strophes as:

> I lingered at a gate and talked
> A little with a lonely lamb.
> He told me of the great still night,
> Of calm starlight,
> And of the lady moon, who'd stoop
> For a kiss sometimes. . . .
> Of how, when sheep grew old,
> As their faith told
> They went without a pang
> To far green fields, where fall
> Perpetual streams that call
> To deathless nightingales.

These fatuous, cliché-crammed stanzas, duly enshrined in the Georgian anthologies, are typical of the worst phase

of this movement. But the true pastoral note is not without its singers. The bucolics of Edmund Blunden, W. J. Turner, Martin Armstrong, Frank Prewett and others contain a quality which makes the verses themselves as interesting as the conditions which caused them.

Opposed to this rustic tendency, one discovers the group headed by the three Sitwells. Satirizing their opponents in prose, poetry and pamphlets, mocking the softness of "Georgianism," these writers send up showers of indignant though sometimes esoteric brilliance wherever their work appears. Whatever the faults of the Sitwellian idiom, it (especially Edith Sitwell's) is like no one else's. While a great part of it belongs to the literature of protest, its challenge to tawdry sentiment is always provocative, sometimes thrilling, and never dull.

Many of the best-known poets who have achieved fame since 1914 belong to no group and cannot be conveniently classified. And yet no account of the first part of this century would be complete without a tribute to the glorified nursery rhymes and moon-soaked fantasies of Walter De la Mare, the limpid and unperturbed lyrics of Ralph Hodgson, the brooding nobilities of Charlotte Mew, the fretted energy of Anna Wickham, the whimsical tunes of James Stephens, the dark introspection of D. H. Lawrence. Disregarding all the other notable poets in this compilation, these unaffiliated six are sufficient answer to those who contend that the age we live in is hopelessly prosaic.

SUMMARY

This collection is a companion volume to *Modern American Poetry,* the period covered by both volumes being approximately the same. A comparison of the two books gives a fairly complete picture of the two branches

of our literature, revealing many curious contrasts and a few general differences. Broadly speaking, modern British verse is smoother, more matured, and, molded by centuries of literature, richer in associations. American poetry, no longer colonially imitative, is sharper, more vigorously experimental; it is full of youth, with youth's occasional (and natural) crudities. Where the English product is formulated, precise and (in spite of a few fluctuations) true to its past, the American expression is far more varied and—being the reflection of partly indigenous, partly naturalized and largely unassimilated ideas and temperaments—is characteristically uncoördinated. American poetry might be described as a sudden rush of unconnected mountain torrents and valley streams; instead of one placidly moving body, there are a dozen turbulent currents. English poetry, on the other hand, may be compared to a broad and luxuriating river with a series of tributaries contributing to the now thinning, now widening channel.

It is, I believe, fascinating to observe how the course of poetry in Great Britain has been deflected temporarily in the last forty years, how it has swung from one tendency toward another, and how, for all its bends and twists, it has lost neither its strength nor its direction.

L. U.

LONDON,
January, 1925.

Thomas Hardy

Thomas Hardy, born at Upper Bockhampton, near Dorchester, in 1840, has been known for many years on both sides of the Atlantic as the author of a series of intense and sombre novels. His reputation as a poet has grown more slowly; to-day several of his admirers claim that his verse surpasses even the best of his prose.

Hardy's schooling was anything but academic. When sixteen, he was apprenticed to an ecclesiastical architect. Later, he left his native village and worked in London, where he won the prize offered by the Royal Institute of British Architects. This was in 1863. A few years after, he abandoned architecture and, in 1871, his first novel, *Desperate Remedies,* was published. It was a failure, little attention being paid to the author until the publication of *Under the Greenwood Tree.* From that time on his success as a writer was assured; with *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure,* his fame became international.

It was not until he was almost sixty—in 1898, to be precise—that Hardy abandoned prose and challenged attention as a poet, verse having been the form of expression with which he began and, as many (including the editor and Hardy himself) believe, the form by which he will be remembered longest. Technically considered, the rhythms of his verse are, at first reading, irritatingly rude; his syntax is often clumsy; his language involved. But, beneath the surface crudities—and many of them are intentional, an effort to achieve particular effects—Hardy's poetry is as disciplined as it is original. If its idiom is sometimes overweighted, it corresponds to the massive design and complexities of his thought. "It has," says Dorothy Martin, in an essay on Hardy's lyrics, "an elemental power which, in its wide range of emotion, its sense of inner conflict between mind and heart, affords something like a counterpart in poetry to the art of Rodin in sculpture. To the horror of the orthodox, it has outwardly the

same challenging roughnesses and acerbities; it has also the same profundity and stimulating power for those who, refusing to be put off by a difficult exterior, push on to the inner spirit of which this exterior is the vigorous, provocative but fitting expression."

Hardy has written in almost every metre, old and new, but his closely packed intensity is at its richest in the ballad measures which he prefers and in which his narrative genius is given full play. "In the Servants' Quarters" is a splendid instance of Hardy's talk-flavored verse which ascends from casual speech on a *crescendo* of dramatic effect. In quite another manner, his *Satires of Circumstance* (reminding an American reader of Masters' *Spoon River Anthology,* which it anticipated) are epigrammatic vignettes in which Hardy has condensed whole domestic dramas.

As a chronicle-poet, Hardy has spread an epic upon the largest canvas of his time. *The Dynasts* (which appeared in three parts in 1902-6-8) is a drama of the Napoleonic Wars, a massive structure in three books, nineteen acts and one hundred and thirty scenes. It is partly an historical play, partly a visionary drama, the apotheosis of Hardy as novelist and poet, a work which Lascelles Abercrombie calls "the biggest and most consistent exhibition of fatalism in literature." While its tragic impressiveness overshadows the author's shorter poems, even his tersest lyrics vibrate with something of the same vigor and knotted strength.

Hardy's *Collected Poems* were published by The Macmillan Company in 1919, a subsequent volume, *Late Lyrics and Earlier,* appearing in 1922. The poet's genius for capturing the smell and color of the whole countryside in a single lyric is particularly revealed in this recent collection.

IN TIME OF "THE BREAKING OF NATIONS"

Only a man harrowing clods
  In a slow silent walk,
With an old horse that stumbles and nods
  Half asleep as they stalk.

Only thin smoke without flame
From the heaps of couch grass:
Yet this will go onward the same
Though Dynasties pass.

Yonder a maid and her wight
Come whispering by;
War's annals will fade into night
Ere their story die.

THE DARKLING THRUSH

I leaned upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings from broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant;
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice burst forth among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy unlimited;

An aged thrush, frail, gaunt and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Has chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carollings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

THE MAN HE KILLED

(*From "The Dynasts"*)

"Had he and I but met
By some old ancient inn,
We should have sat us down to wet
Right many a nipperkin!

"But ranged as infantry,
And staring face to face,
I shot at him as he at me,
And killed him in his place.

"I shot him dead because—
Because he was my foe,
Just so: my foe of course he was;
That's clear enough; although

"He thought he'd 'list, perhaps,
Off-hand-like—just as I—
Was out of work—had sold his traps—
No other reason why.

"Yes; quaint and curious war is!
You shoot a fellow down
You'd treat, if met where any bar is,
Or help to half-a-crown."

IN THE SERVANTS' QUARTERS

"Man, you too, aren't you, one of these rough followers
of the criminal?
All hanging hereabout to gather how he's going to bear
Examination in the hall." She flung disdainful glances on
The shabby figure standing at the fire with others there,
Who warmed them by its flare.

"No, indeed, my skipping maiden: I know nothing of
the trial here,
Or criminal, if so he be.—I chanced to come this way,
And the fire shone out into the dawn, and morning airs
are cold now;
I, too, was drawn in part by charms I see before me play,
That I see not every day."

"Ha, ha!" then laughed the constables who also stood to
warm themselves,
The while another maiden scrutinised his features hard,
As the blaze threw into contrast every knot and line that
wrinkled them,
Exclaiming, "Why, last night when he was brought in by
the guard,
You were with him in the yard!"

"Nay, nay, you teasing wench, I say! You know you
speak mistakenly.
Cannot a tired pedestrian who has legged it long and far
Here on his way from northern parts, engrossed in humble
marketings,
Come in and rest awhile, although judicial doings are
Afoot by morning star?"

"O, come, come!" laughed the constables. "Why, man,
you speak the dialect
He uses in his answers; you can hear him up the stairs.
So own it. We sha'n't hurt ye. There he's speaking
now! His syllables
Are those you sound yourself when you are talking un-
awares,
As this pretty girl declares."

"And you shudder when his chain clinks!" she rejoined.
"O yes, I noticed it.
And you winced, too, when those cuffs they gave him
echoed to us here.
They'll soon be coming down, and you may then have to
defend yourself
Unless you hold your tongue, or go away and keep you
clear
When he's led to judgment near!"

"No! I'll be damned in hell if I know anything about
the man!
No single thing about him more than everybody knows!
Must not I even warm my hands but I am charged with
blasphemies?" . . .
—His face convulses as the morning cock that moment
crows,
And he droops, and turns, and goes.

WEATHERS

This is the weather the cuckoo likes,
And so do I;
When showers benumble the chestnut spikes,
And nestlings fly;
And the little brown nightingale bills his best,
And they sit outside the "Traveller's Rest,"
And maids come forth sprig-muslin drest,
And citizens dream of the South and West,
And so do I.

This is the weather the shepherd shuns,
And so do I:
When beeches drip in browns and duns,
And thresh, and ply;
And hill-hid tides throb, throe on throe,
And meadow rivulets overflow,
And drops on gate-bars hang in a row,
And rooks in families homeward go,
And so do I.

"MY SPIRIT WILL NOT HAUNT THE MOUND"

My spirit will not haunt the mound
Above my breast,
But travel, memory-possessed,
To where my tremulous being found
Life largest, best.

My phantom-footed shape will go
When nightfall grays
Hither and thither along the ways
I and another used to know
In backward days.

And there you'll find me, if a jot
You still should care
For me, and for my curious air;
If otherwise, then I shall not,
For you, be there.

WAITING BOTH

A star looks down at me,
And says: "Here I and you
Stand, each in our degree:
What do you mean to do—
Mean to do?"

I say: "For all I know,
Wait, and let Time go by,
Till my change come."—"Just so,"
The star says: "So mean I—
So mean I."

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt was born at Petworth House, Crawley, Sussex, in 1840. He was educated at St. Mary's College, Oscott, and was a member of the diplomatic service from 1858 to 1870. He spent many years in the East, his observations making him strongly sympathetic to lesser nationalities and all the down-

trodden. Travelling in North Africa, Asia Minor and Arabia in the late seventies, what he saw caused him to support the Islamic movement, and to oppose the British government's control until his death. He favored the cause of the Egyptians; his voice was always lifted for justice to Ireland; he joined Lloyd George in condemning the Boer war.

As a poet, he is best known by his *The Love Sonnets of Proteus* (1881) and *The New Pilgrimage* (1889). Both volumes reveal a deep, philosophical nature expressing itself in terms of high seriousness. A collected edition of his works was published in 1914, and, in 1923, a *Selected Poems,* edited by Floyd Dell, was brought out in America.

His remarkable *My Diaries* [*1888-1914*] appeared when Blunt was an octogenarian, in 1921, a work which its British publisher quickly withdrew from the market because of its blunt revelations of British secret diplomacy. Shortly before his death, he wrote, "I have lived my life in full. No life is perfect that has not been lived youth in feeling, manhood in battle, old age in meditation." Blunt died in London, September 11, 1922.

LAUGHTER AND DEATH

There is no laughter in the natural world
Of beast or fish or bird, though no sad doubt
Of their futurity to them unfurled
Has dared to check the mirth-compelling shout.
The lion roars his solemn thunder out
To the sleeping woods. The eagle screams her cry.
Even the lark must strain a serious throat
To hurl his blest defiance at the sky.

Fear, anger, jealousy, have found a voice.
Love's pain or rapture the brute bosoms swell.
Nature has symbols for her nobler joys,
Her nobler sorrows. Who has dared foretell
That only man, by some sad mockery,
Should learn to laugh who learns that he must die?

ON THE SHORTNESS OF TIME

If I could live without the thought of death,
Forgetful of time's waste, the soul's decay,
I would not ask for other joy than breath
With light and sound of birds and the sun's ray.
I could sit on untroubled day by day
Watching the grass grow, and the wild flowers range
From blue to yellow and from red to grey
In natural sequence as the seasons change.
I could afford to wait, but for the hurt
Of this dull tick of time which chides my ear.
But now I dare not sit with loins ungirt
And staff unlifted, for death stands too near.
I must be up and doing—ay, each minute.
The grave gives time for rest when we are in it.

THE TWO HIGHWAYMEN

I long have had a quarrel set with Time
Because he robb'd me. Every day of life
Was wrested from me after bitter strife:
I never yet could see the sun go down
But I was angry in my heart, nor hear
The leaves fall in the wind without a tear
Over the dying summer. I have known
No truce with Time nor Time's accomplice, Death.
The fair world is the witness of a crime
Repeated every hour. For life and breath
Are sweet to all who live; and bitterly
The voices of these robbers of the heath
Sound in each ear and chill the passer-by.
—What have we done to thee, thou monstrous Time?
What have we done to Death that we must die?

(Henry) Austin Dobson was born at Plymouth, in 1840, and was educated in Wales and on the Continent. In 1856, he received a clerkship in The Board of Trade and remained in official life a great part of his life.

His first collection, *Vignettes in Rhyme* (1873), attracted attention by the ease with which the author managed his dexterous and most difficult effects. With *Proverbs in Porcelain* (1877), *Old World Idylls* (1883), and *At the Sign of the Lyre* (1885), it was evident that a new master of *vers de société* had arisen. The crispness and clean delicacy of his verse make him the peer of Prior, Praed and Thomas Hood.

During the latter part of his life, he devoted himself to a type of semi-biographical essay, intended to preserve the spirit of some nearly- or wholly-forgotten celebrity. In this form, his prose is scarcely less distinctive than his verse; his detailed and charmingly dispensed knowledge of the time of Queen Anne gives to his writings its own special flavor of "archaic gentility."

Although most of his rhymes are charming rather than profound, certain pages, like the famous rondeau "In After Days" and "Before Sedan," are memorable for their serious clarity.

Dobson died September 3, 1921.

IN AFTER DAYS

In after days when grasses high
O'ertop the stone where I shall lie,
  Though ill or well the world adjust
  My slender claim to honored dust,
I shall not question or reply.

I shall not see the morning sky;
I shall not hear the night-wind's sigh;
  I shall be mute, as all men must
    In after days!

But yet, now living, fain were I
That some one then should testify,
  Saying—"He held his pen in trust
  To Art, not serving shame or lust."
Will none?—Then let my memory die
    In after days!

BEFORE SEDAN

"The dead hand clasped a letter."
—Special Correspondence.

Here in this leafy place
  Quiet he lies,
Cold with his sightless face
  Turned to the skies;
'Tis but another dead;
All you can say is said.

Carry his body hence,—
  Kings must have slaves;
Kings climb to eminence
  Over men's graves:
So this man's eye is dim;—
Throw the earth over him.

What was the white you touched,
  There, at his side?
Paper his hand had clutched
  Tight ere he died;—
Message or wish, may be;
Smooth the folds out and see.

Hardly the worst of us
  Here could have smiled!
Only the tremulous
  Words of a child;
Prattle, that has for stops
Just a few ruddy drops.

Look. She is sad to miss,
  Morning and night,
His—her dead father's—kiss;
  Tries to be bright,
Good to mamma, and sweet.
That is all. "Marguerite."

Ah, if beside the dead
  Slumbered the pain!
Ah, if the hearts that bled
  Slept with the slain!
If the grief died;—but no.
Death will not have it so.

FAME AND FRIENDSHIP

Fame is a food that dead men eat,—
I have no stomach for such meat.
In little light and narrow room,
They eat it in the silent tomb,
With no kind voice of comrade near
To bid the feaster be of cheer.

But friendship is a nobler thing,—
Of Friendship it is good to sing.

For truly, when a man shall end,
He lives in memory of his friend,
Who doth his better part recall
And of his fault make funeral.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy

The Irish-English singer, Arthur (William Edgar) O'Shaughnessy, was born in London in 1844. He was connected, for a while, with the British Museum, and was transferred later to the Department of Natural History. His first literary success, *Epic of Women* (1870), promised a splendid future for the young poet, a promise strengthened by his *Music and Moonlight* (1874). Always delicate in health, his hopes were dashed by periods of illness and an early death in London in 1881.

The poems here reprinted, like all of O'Shaughnessy's, owe much to their editors. The "Ode," which is one of the classics of this age, originally had seven verses, the last four being mediocre tuneful versifying. When Palgrave compiled his *Golden Treasury,* he recognized the great difference between the first three inspired stanzas and the others—and calmly and courageously dropped the final four.

William Alexander Percy recently performed a similar service for this singer who, nine-tenths of the time, was an undistinguished minor poet. It is a series of liberties he has taken in his *Poems of Arthur O'Shaughnessy* (1922), but the editorial omissions are all justifiable. As he says, "in O'Shaughnessy's case, it is the only way to save him from himself and for posterity."

ODE

We are the music-makers,
  And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
  And sitting by desolate streams;

World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample an empire down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself with our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

THE NEW LOVE AND THE OLD

I made another garden, yea,
For my new Love:
I left the dead rose where it lay
And set the new above.
Why did my Summer not begin?
Why did my heart not haste?
My old Love came and walk'd therein,
And laid the garden waste.

She enter'd with her weary smile,
  Just as of old;
She look'd around a little while
  And shiver'd with the cold:
Her passing touch was death to all,
  Her passing look a blight;
She made the white rose-petals fall,
  And turn'd the red rose white.

Her pale robe clinging to the grass
  Seem'd like a snake
That bit the grass and ground, alas!
  And a sad trail did make.
She went up slowly to the gate,
  And then, just as of yore,
She turn'd back at the last to wait
  And say farewell once more.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Gerard (Manley) Hopkins was born in 1844, became a Jesuit, and was an instructor in Greek and Greek metres at University College in Dublin. Although he wrote much during an intensely spiritual life, none of his poetry appeared during his lifetime, and it was not until thirty years after his death that his extraordinary verse was collected. Hopkins died in 1898 and the world was not given the *Poems of Gerard Hopkins, Now First Published, with Notes by Robert Bridges* until 1919. Many of the verses in this posthumous volume were deciphered from manuscript by the Poet-Laureate and it is to him that one must be grateful for rescuing the work of a most original though complicated mind from oblivion.

A reader of Hopkins should expect obstacles; he must be prepared for difficulties that, at first, seem insuperable. He must be willing to accept a series of musical dissonances, compared to which the most cacophonous passages in Browning are limpid and bird-like. He must penetrate obscurities which are

cloudy to the point of being unintelligible. But he will be rewarded. Behind the tortured constructions and heaped-up epithets there is magnificence. In spite of the verbal excesses, the irritating oddities, the awkward sentence structure, there is an originality of vision which is nothing less than startling. In its intimate fancifulness, the imagery is reminiscent of the more controlled extravagances of Emily Dickinson. Like the New England poetess, Hopkins' poetry is sometimes eccentric, but it is always logical, never arbitrary or perverse.

Hopkins himself worked out a curious scheme of prosody (he even invented a system of signs to make plain the effects he wished to achieve) and his lines (as his own preface tells us) are "written in Running Rhythm, the common rhythm in English use, some in Sprung Rhythm (a free beat strongly suggestive of later *vers libre*) and some in a mixture of both." The beauty in his least peculiar poems makes it lamentable that Hopkins (to quote his editor) "died when, to judge by his latest work, he was beginning to concentrate the force of all his luxuriant experiments in rhythm and diction, and castigate his art into a more reserved style." For, even in the cloudiest of his poems, there is a splendor, a rush of rhyme, a cataract of color, attained by scarcely any of his clearer-speaking contemporaries.

PIED BEAUTY

Glory be to God for dappled things—
  For skies as couple-coloured as a brindled cow;
    For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
  Landscapes plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and
      plough;
    And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.
All things counter, original, spare, strange;
  Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
    With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
      Praise Him.

THE HABIT OF PERFECTION

Elected Silence, sing to me
And beat upon my whorlèd ear,
Pipe me to pastures still, and be
The music that I care to hear.

Shape nothing, lips; be lovely-dumb;
It is the shut, the curfew sent
From there where all surrenders come
Which only makes you eloquent.

Be shellèd, eyes, with double dark
And find the uncreated light:
This ruck and reel which you remark
Coils, keeps, and teases simple sight.

Palate, the hatch of tasty lust,
Desire not to be rinsed with wine:
The can must be so sweet, the crust
So fresh that come in fasts divine!

Nostrils, your careless breath that spend
Upon the stir and keep of pride,
What relish shall the censers send
Along the sanctuary side!

O feel-of-primrose hands, O feet
That want the yield of plushy sward,
But you shall walk the golden street
And you unhouse and house the Lord.

And, Poverty, be thou the bride
And now the marriage feast begun,
And lily-coloured clothes provide
Your spouse not laboured-at nor spun.

THE LEADEN ECHO

How to keep—is there any any, is there none such, nowhere known, some bow or brooch or braid or brace, lace, latch or catch or key to keep
Back beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty, . . . from vanishing away?
Oh, is there no frowning of these wrinkles, ranked wrinkles deep,
Down? no waving-off of these most mournful messengers, still messengers, sad and stealing messengers of grey?
No, there's none, there's none—oh, no, there's none!
Nor can you long be, what you now are, called fair—
Do what you may do, do what you may,
And wisdom is early to despair:
Be beginning; since, no, nothing can be done
To keep at bay
Age and age's evils—hoar hair,
Ruck and wrinkle, drooping, dying, death's worst, winding sheets, tombs and worms and tumbling to decay;
So be beginning, be beginning to despair.
Oh, there's none—no, no, no, there's none:
Be beginning to despair, to despair,
Despair, despair, despair, despair.

Robert (Seymour) Bridges was born October 23, 1844. He was educated at Eton and Corpus Christi, Oxford, and, after having travelled, studied medicine, taking the post of Casualty Surgeon at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. He retired from the medical profession in 1882, devoting himself entirely to literature. Although many more prominent poets were suggested for the high office, the classic restraint of his verse won him the highest official honour: he became Poet Laureate in 1913. So often has the Laureateship been nothing more than a political prize that it is gratifying to know that the award went to one who was distinguished for nothing more zealous than his art.

The subjects of his many volumes are indicative of his expression; a few of the titles are: *Prometheus the Firegiver; Eros and Psyche; Achilles in Scyros; The Feast of Bacchus.* His more recent work, although not strictly modern, is closer in spirit to our own time. The distinguishing features of his *Shorter Poems* (1894) are a subtlety of rhythm, a precise command of metrical delicacies. It is, in fact, as a metrician that his work is most interesting; even his most academic lines bear a beauty of pattern. Apart from the skill of versification, there are many delights for the most casual reader in his collected *Poetical Works* (excluding the dramas) which appeared in 1913.

A more recent volume, *October and Other Poems,* appeared in 1920 and illustrates again the palpitating loveliness which lies just beneath the apparently cold surface of Bridges's work.

WINTER NIGHTFALL

The day begins to droop,—
  Its course is done:
But nothing tells the place
  Of the setting sun.

The hazy darkness deepens,
  And up the lane
You may hear, but cannot see,
  The homing wain.

An engine pants and hums
  In the farm hard by:
Its lowering smoke is lost
  In the lowering sky.

The soaking branches drip,
  And all night through
The dropping will not cease
  In the avenue.

A tall man there in the house
  Must keep his chair:
He knows he will never again
  Breathe the spring air:

His heart is worn with work;
  He is giddy and sick
If he rise to go as far
  As the nearest rick:

He thinks of his morn of life,
  His hale, strong years;
And braves as he may the night
  Of darkness and tears.

LONDON SNOW

When men were all asleep the snow came flying,
In large white flakes falling on the city brown,
Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely lying,
  Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town;
Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing;
Lazily and incessantly floating down and down;

Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing;
Hiding difference, making unevenness even,
Into angles and crevices softly drifting and sailing.
All night it fell, and when full inches seven
It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,
The clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven;
And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed brightness
Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare:
The eye marvelled—marvelled at the dazzling whiteness;
The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn air;
No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,
And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.
Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling;
They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze
Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snow-balling;
Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees;
Or peering up from under the white-mossed wonder,
"O look at the trees!" they cried. "O look at the trees!"
With lessened load, a few carts creak and blunder,
Following along the white deserted way,
A country company long dispersed asunder:
When now already the sun, in pale display
Standing by Paul's high dome, spread forth below
His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day.
For now doors open, and war is waged with the snow;
And trains of sombre men, past tale of number,
Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil they go:
But even for them awhile no cares encumber
Their minds diverted; the daily word is unspoken,
The daily thoughts of labour and sorrow slumber
At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for the charm
they have broken.

NIGHTINGALES

Beautiful must be the mountains whence ye come,
And bright in the fruitful valleys the streams wherefrom
Ye learn your song:
Where are those starry woods? O might I wander there,
Among the flowers, which in that heavenly air
Bloom the year long!

Nay, barren are those mountains and spent the streams:
Our song is the voice of desire, that haunts our dreams,
A throe of the heart,
Whose pining visions dim, forbidden hopes profound,
No dying cadence nor long sigh can sound,
For all our art.

Alone, aloud in the raptured ear of men
We pour our dark nocturnal secret; and then,
As night is withdrawn
From these sweet-springing meads and bursting boughs of May,
Dream, while the innumerable choir of day
Welcome the dawn.

Andrew Lang

Andrew Lang, critic and essayist, was born in 1844 and educated at Balliol College, Oxford. Besides his many well-known translations of Homer, Theocritus and the Greek Anthology, he has published numerous biographical works.

As a poet, his chief claim rests on his delicate light verse. *Ballads and Lyrics of Old France* (1872), *Ballades in Blue China* (1880), and *Rhymes à la Mode* (1884) disclose Lang as a graceful lyrist, a lesser Austin Dobson.

SCYTHE SONG

Mowers, weary and brown and blithe,
  What is the word, methinks, ye know,
Endless over-word that the Scythe
  Sings to the blades of the grass below?
Scythes that swing in the grass and clover,
  Something, still, they say as they pass;
What is the word that, over and over,
  Sings the Scythe to the flowers and grass?

Hush, ah, hush, the Scythes are saying,
  Hush, and heed not, and fall asleep;
Hush, they say to the grasses swaying;
  Hush, they sing to the clover deep!
Hush—'tis the lullaby Time is singing—
  Hush, and heed not, for all things pass;
Hush, ah, hush! and the Scythes are swinging
  Over the clover, over the grass!

Eugene Lee-Hamilton

Eugene (Jacob) Lee-Hamilton was born in London, January 6, 1845, and was educated partly in France and Germany, partly under tutors at home. Never in robust health, he was forced to leave Oriel College at Oxford without a degree, and, after various positions with the British Diplomatic Service abroad, had to retire from all active work. For twenty years, he was incapacitated and had to lie on his back, suffering from a nervous disease similar to that which kept Heine on his "mattress grave." He died in Italy, near Florence, on September 7, 1907.

In spite of his long illness, he was able to compose and dictate some ten volumes of verse, the earliest of which is *Poems and Transcripts* (1878). However, the work on which his repu-

tation rests is a series of autobiographic poems, *Sonnets of the Wingless Hours* (1894), a sequence that displays his delicate skill in the classic form. In 1903, Lee-Hamilton made a selection from his own poems which appeared in "The Canterbury Poets" series with a preface by William Sharp.

ROMAN BATHS

There were some Roman baths where we spent hours:
  Immense and lonely courts of rock like brick,
  All overgrown with verdure strong and thick,
And girding sweet wild lawns all full of flowers.

One day, beneath the turf, green with the showers
  Of all the centuries since Genseric,
  They found rich pavements hidden by Time's trick,
Adorned with tritons, dolphins, doves like ours.

So, underneath the surface of To-day,
  Lies yesterday, and what we call the Past,
The only thing which never can decay.

Things bygone are the only things that last:
  The Present is mere grass, quick-mown away:
The Past is stone, and stands for ever fast.

Michael Field

Michael Field was the pen-name adopted by two women: an aunt, Katherine Harris Bradley, born in 1846, and her niece, Edith Emma Cooper, born in 1862. The affection between the two was unusually deep; it is evident that many of their poems were written to each other. But, during their lifetime, few discovered the secret of their disguise. Robert Browning was the first to hail Michael Field with enthusiasm, and the early

work had a great vogue in the 'eighties. But—possibly due to the waning interest in classicism, possibly because of their overproductiveness—the twinned poets lost the public's interest and "the literary world," to quote Sturge Moore, "having been plunged into a disproportionate eagerness, next plunged into an equally unintelligent neglect."

Between 1887 and 1912, the two authors published more than a dozen volumes of poems and poetic plays; two other books were issued posthumously. In 1913, Edith Cooper died of a malignant disease which she had concealed from her fellow-worker; a few months later, in 1914, the older, Katherine Bradley, died of the same illness.

The best known of Michael Field's volumes is the set of adaptations from Sappho entitled *Long Ago*. But, though the collections of their original verse suffer from unevenness and lack of condensation, a few lyrics, like the one beginning "I could wish to be dead," are poignantly direct and such an outcry as "Descent from the Cross" burns with an ecstatic fire. *The Accuser and other Plays* (1911) contains the most vivid of the dramas and *Dedicated* (1914) and *In the Name of Time* (1919) were issued after Field's death.

A Selection from the Poems of Michael Field with a Preface by T. Sturge Moore was published by The Poetry Bookshop in 1923. An invaluable study, *Michael Field,* the result of years of patient labor by Mary Sturgeon, appeared in 1922.

THE TRAGIC MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

I could wish to be dead!
Too quick with life were the tears I shed,
Too sweet for tears is the life I led;
And, ah, too lonesome my marriage-bed!
I could wish to be dead.

I could wish to be dead,
For just a word that rings in my head;
Too dear, too dear are the words he said,
They must never be remembered.
I could wish to be dead.

I could wish to be dead:
The wish to be loved is all mis-read,
And to love, one learns when one is wed,
Is to suffer bitter shame; instead
I could wish to be dead.

AFTER SOUFRIÈRE[1]

It is not grief or pain;
But like the even dropping of the rain,
That thou art gone.
It is not like a grave
To weep upon;
But like the rise and falling of a wave
When the vessel's gone.
It is like the sudden void
When the city is destroyed,
Where the sun shone:
There is neither grief nor pain,
But the wide waste come again.

MORE GOLD THAN GOLD

(*After Sappho*)

Yea, gold is son of Zeus: no rust
  Its timeless light can stain;
The worm that brings man's flesh to dust
  Assaults its strength in vain:
More gold than gold the love I sing,
A hard, inviolable thing.

[1] T. Sturge Moore says: "I believe this title to refer to a volcanic cataclysm in which the town of Soufrière in Guadeloupe was destroyed, and which had occurred just before the poem was written."

Men say the passions should grow old
With waning years; my heart
Is incorruptible as gold,
'Tis my immortal part;
Nor is there any god can lay
On love the finger of decay.

DESCENT FROM THE CROSS[1]

Come down from the Cross, my soul, and save thyself—
come down!
Thou wilt be free as wind. None meeting thee will know
How thou wert hanging stark, my soul, outside the town,
Thou wilt fare to and fro;
Thy feet in grass will smell of faithful thyme; thy
head. . . .
Think of the thorns, my soul—how thou wilt cast them
off,
With shudder at the bleeding clench they hold!
But on their wounds thou wilt a balsam spread,
And over that a verdurous circle rolled
With gathered violets, sweet bright violets, sweet
As incense of the thyme on thy free feet;
A wreath thou wilt not give away, nor wilt thou doff.

Come down from the Cross, my soul, and save thyself;
yea, move
As scudding swans pass lithely on a seaward stream!
Thou wilt have everything; thou wert made great to love;
Thou wilt have ease for every dream;
No nails with fang will hold thy purpose to one aim;

[1] This poem is from *Poems of Adoration* (1912), which was entirely written (with the exception of a few pages) by Edith Cooper after her conversion.

There will be arbours round about thee, not one trunk
Against thy shoulders pressed and burning them with hate,
Yea, burning with intolerable flame.
O lips, such noxious vinegar have drunk,
There are, through valley-woods and mountain glades,
Rivers where thirst in naked prowess wades;
And there are wells in solitude whose chill no hour abates!

Come down from the Cross, my soul, and save thyself!
A sign
Thou wilt become to many as a shooting star.
They will believe thou art ethereal, divine,
When thou art where they are;
They will believe in thee and give thee feasts and praise.
They will believe thy power when thou hast loosed thy nails;
For power to them is fetterless and grand:
For destiny to them, along their ways,
Is one whose earthly Kingdom never fails.
Thou wilt be as a prophet or a king
In thy tremendous term of flourishing—
And thy hot royalty with acclamations fanned.

Come down from the Cross, my soul, and save thyself!
. . . Beware!
Art thou not crucified with God, who is thy breath?
Wilt thou not hang as He while mockers laugh and stare?
Wilt thou not die His death?
Wilt thou not stay as He with nails and thorns and thirst?
Wilt thou not choose to conquer faith in His lone style?
Wilt thou not be with Him and hold thee still?

Voices have cried to him, *Come Down!* Accursed
And vain those voices, striving to beguile!
How heedless, solemn-gray in powerful mass,
Christ droops among the echoes as they pass!
O soul, remain with Him, with Him thy doom fulfil!

William Ernest Henley

William Ernest Henley was born in 1849 and was educated at the Grammar School of Gloucester. From childhood he was afflicted with a tuberculous disease which finally necessitated the amputation of a foot. His *Hospital Verses,* those vivid precursors of current free verse, were a record of the time when he was at the infirmary at Edinburgh; they are sharp with the sights, sensations, even the actual smells, of the sick-room. In spite (or, more probably, because) of his continued poor health, Henley never ceased to worship strength and energy; courage and a triumphant belief in a harsh world shine out of the athletic *London Voluntaries* (1892) and the lightest and most musical lyrics in *Hawthorne and Lavender* (1898).

The bulk of Henley's poetry is not great in volume. He has himself explained the small quantity of his work in a Preface to his *Poems,* first published by Charles Scribner's Sons in 1898. "A principal reason," he says, "is that, after spending the better part of my life in the pursuit of poetry, I found myself (about 1877) so utterly unmarketable that I had to own myself beaten in art, and to indict myself to journalism for the next ten years." Later on, he began to write again—"old dusty sheaves were dragged to light; the work of selection and correction was begun; I burned much; I found that, after all, the lyrical instinct had slept—not died."

After a brilliant and varied career (see Preface), devoted mostly to journalism, Henley died in 1903.

INVICTUS

Out of the night that covers me,
  Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
  For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
  I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
  My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
  Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
  Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
  How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
  I am the captain of my soul.

THE BLACKBIRD

The nightingale has a lyre of gold,
    The lark's is a clarion call,
And the blackbird plays but a boxwood flute,
    But I love him best of all.

For his song is all of the joy of life,
    And we in the mad, spring weather,
We two have listened till he sang
    Our hearts and lips together.

A BOWL OF ROSES

It was a bowl of roses:
    There in the light they lay,
Languishing, glorying, glowing
    Their life away.

And the soul of them rose like a presence,
    Into me crept and grew,
And filled me with something—some one—
    O, was it you?

BEFORE

Behold me waiting—waiting for the knife.
A little while, and at a leap I storm
The thick sweet mystery of chloroform,
The drunken dark, the little death-in-life.
The gods are good to me: I have no wife,
No innocent child, to think of as I near
The fateful minute; nothing all-too dear
Unmans me for my bout of passive strife.
Yet I am tremulous and a trifle sick,
And, face to face with chance, I shrink a little:
My hopes are strong, my will is something weak.
Here comes the basket? Thank you. I am ready
But, gentlemen my porters, life is brittle:
You carry Cæsar and his fortunes—Steady!

MARGARITÆ SORORI

A late lark twitters from the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, grey city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!
My task accomplished and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,
Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death.

Robert Louis Stevenson

Robert Louis Stevenson was born at Edinburgh in 1850 and attended the University there. He was at first trained to be a lighthouse engineer, following the profession of his family.

However, he studied law instead; was admitted to the bar in 1875; and abandoned law for literature a few years later. His poor health necessitated travel, particularly in warm climates, and in 1879 he journeyed to California, where, a year later, he married. After a return to Scotland, a sojourn in Switzerland and a second visit to the Pacific coast, his illness drove him to a cruise in the South Seas. He finally settled at Vailima in the Samoan Islands, where, after a long fight, he succumbed to consumption in 1894.

Though primarily a novelist, Stevenson has left one immortal book of poetry which is equally at home in the nursery and the library: *A Child's Garden of Verses* (first published in 1885) is second only to Mother Goose's own collection in its lyrical simplicity and universal appeal. With the exception of these favorite verses and a posthumous *New Poems* (1918), *Underwoods* (1887) and *Ballads* (1890) comprise his entire poetic output. As a genial essayist, he is not unworthy to be ranked with Charles Lamb. As a romancer, his fame rests securely on *Kidnapped,* the unfinished masterpiece, *Weir of Hermiston,* and that eternal classic of youth, *Treasure Island.*

SUMMER SUN

Great is the sun, and wide he goes
Through empty heaven without repose;
And in the blue and glowing days
More thick than rain he showers his rays.

Though closer still the blinds we pull
To keep the shady parlour cool,
Yet he will find a chink or two
To slip his golden fingers through.

The dusty attic, spider-clad,
He, through the keyhole, maketh glad;
And through the broken edge of tiles
Into the laddered hay-loft smiles.

Meantime his golden face around
He bares to all the garden ground,
And sheds a warm and glittering look
Among the ivy's inmost nook.

Above the hills, along the blue,
Round the bright air with footing true,
To please the child, to paint the rose,
The gardener of the World, he goes.

WINTER TIME

Late lies the wintry sun a-bed,
A frosty, fiery sleepy-head;
Blinks but an hour or two; and then,
A blood-red orange, sets again.

Before the stars have left the skies,
At morning in the dark I rise;
And, shivering in my nakedness,
By the cold candle, bathe and dress.

Close by the jolly fire I sit
To warm my frozen bones a bit;
Or, with a reindeer-sled, explore
The colder countries round the door.

When to go out, my nurse doth wrap
Me in my comforter and cap;
The cold wind burns my face, and blows
Its frosty pepper up my nose.

Black are my steps on silver sod;
Thick blows my frosty breath abroad;
And tree and house, and hill and lake,
Are frosted like a wedding-cake.

THE CELESTIAL SURGEON

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain:—
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake;
Or, Lord, if still too obdurate I,
Choose thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dear heart run them in!

REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky
  Dig the grave and let me lie:
Glad did I live and gladly die,
  And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you 'grave for me:
  Here he lies where he long'd to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
  And the hunter home from the hill.

Alice (Christiana Thompson) Meynell was born in 1850, educated at home and spent a great part of her early life in Italy. Later, she married Wilfrid Meynell, the friend, editor and literary executor of Francis Thompson. One of her children is Francis Meynell, the well known printer and writer; another is Viola Meynell (see page 310). Alice Meynell died in 1923.

Preludes was published in 1876. Since then, various collections of her poems and essays have appeared at irregular intervals, and, in 1923, Charles Scribner's Sons published *The Poems of Alice Meynell* (Complete Edition). From the earliest restrained verses to the later more ornate conceits, one strain is dominant: the music of religious emotion. It is, obviously, emotion controlled, almost intellectualized. Yet the poetry is never dull. The reader is always aware of a nature disciplined but which, for all its self-imposed strictures, is rich in feeling, vivid in communication. Owing something to the pre-Raphaelites, something to Thompson and the metaphysical poets, Mrs. Meynell's intensity, with its wealth of imagery, is her own.

TO A DAISY [1]

Slight as thou art, thou art enough to hide,
  Like all created things, secrets from me,
  And stand a barrier to eternity.
And I, how can I praise thee well and wide
From where I dwell—upon the hither side?
  Thou little veil for so great mystery,
  When shall I penetrate all things and thee,
And then look back? For this I must abide,
Till thou shalt grow and fold and be unfurled
Literally between me and the world.
  Then I shall drink from in beneath a spring,
And from a poet's side shall read his book.
O daisy mine, what will it be to look
  From God's side even on such a simple thing?

[1] Compare the poem on the same theme on page 334.

THE SHEPHERDESS

She walks—the lady of my delight—
  A shepherdess of sheep.
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white;
  She guards them from the steep;
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
  And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright
  Dark valleys safe and deep.
Into that tender breast at night,
  The chastest stars may peep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
  A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
  Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right;
  She has her soul to keep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
  A shepherdess of sheep.

THE WIND IS BLIND

"Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill, with slaves."
Milton's Samson.

The wind is blind.
The earth sees sun and moon; the height
Is watch-tower to the dawn; the plain
Shines to the summer; visible light
Is scattered in the drops of rain.

The wind is blind.
The flashing billows are aware;
With open eyes the cities see;
Light leaves the ether, everywhere
Known to the homing bird and bee.

The wind is blind,
Is blind alone. How has he hurled
His ignorant lash, his sinless dart,
His eyeless rush upon the world,
Unseeing, to break his unknown heart!

The wind is blind.
And the sail traps him, and the mill
Captures him; and he cannot save
His swiftness and his desperate will
From those blind uses of the slave.

F. W. Bourdillon

Frances William Bourdillon was born in 1852 and educated at Worcester College, Oxford. Although he wrote half a dozen volumes of verse, the only things of his which seem destined to survive are an excellent translation of *Aucassin and Nicolette* (published in 1879) and the tiny love-song without which no anthology of the period is complete. Such volumes of his as *A Lost God* (1891) and *Through the Gateway* (1902) contain writing which is neither better nor worse than the average of its kind.

Bourdillon died in the summer of 1921.

THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

Fiona Macleod

(*William Sharp*)

William Sharp was born at Garthland Place, Scotland, in 1855. He wrote several volumes of biography and criticism, published a book of plays greatly influenced by Maeterlinck (*Vistas*) and was editor of "The Canterbury Poets" series.

His feminine *alter ego,* Fiona Macleod, was a far different personality. Sharp actually believed himself possessed of another spirit; under the spell of this second self, he wrote several volumes of Celtic tales, beautiful tragic romances and no little unusual poetry. Of the prose stories written by Fiona Macleod, the most barbaric and vivid are those collected in *The Sin-Eater and Other Tales;* the longer *Pharais, A Romance of the Isles,* is scarcely less fascinating.

In the ten years, 1882-1891, William Sharp published four volumes of rather undistinguished verse. In 1896, *From the Hills of Dream* appeared over the signature of Fiona Macleod; *The Hour of Beauty,* an even more distinctive collection, followed shortly. Both poetry and prose were always the result of two sharply differentiated moods constantly fluctuating; the

emotional mood was that of Fiona Macleod, the intellectual and, it must be admitted, the more arresting contribution was that of William Sharp.

He died in 1905.

THE VALLEY OF SILENCE

In the secret Valley of Silence
No breath doth fall;
No wind stirs in the branches;
No bird doth call:
As on a white wall
A breathless lizard is still,
So silence lies on the valley,
Breathlessly still.

In the dusk-grown heart of the valley
An altar rises white:
No rapt priest bends in awe
Before its silent light:
But sometimes a flight
Of breathless words of prayer
White-wing'd enclose the altar,
Eddies of prayer.

THE VISION

In a fair place
Of whin and grass,
I heard feet pass
Where no one was.

I saw a face
Bloom like a flower—
Nay, as the rainbow-shower
Of a tempestuous hour.

It was not man, or woman:
It was not human:
But, beautiful and wild,
Terribly undefiled,
I knew an unborn child.

Margaret L. Woods

Margaret Louisa (Bradley) Woods was born at Rugby in 1856. Her father was the Dean of Westminster and she was educated at home. She married the late Rev. H. G. Woods, President of Trinity College, Oxford, and it is not strange that her work is filled with classic influences, surrounded as she was from her infancy with the flower of academic life.

However, in her dramas she transcended herself and her backgrounds; her numerous novels, though never great, are not without distinction. Her first volume, *Lyrics,* was privately printed in 1888; *Aeromancy* (1896) and *Songs* (1896) are her chief later works. A collected edition of her poems was published in 1914.

TO THE FORGOTTEN DEAD

To the forgotten dead,
Come, let us drink in silence ere we part.
To every fervent yet resolvèd heart
That brought its tameless passion and its tears,
Renunciation and laborious years,
To lay the deep foundations of our race,

To rear its stately fabric overhead
And light its pinnacles with golden grace.
To the unhonoured dead.

To the forgotten dead,
Whose dauntless hands were stretched to grasp the rein
Of Fate and hurl into the void again
Her thunder-hoofèd horses, rushing blind
Earthward along the courses of the wind.
Among the stars, along the wind in vain
Their souls were scattered and their blood was shed,
And nothing, nothing of them doth remain.
To the thrice-perished dead.

Oscar Wilde

Oscar (Fingall O'Flahertie) Wilde was born at Dublin, Ireland, October 16, 1856, and even as an undergraduate at Oxford was marked for a brilliant career. When he was scarcely 21 years of age, he won the Newdigate Prize with his poem *Ravenna.*

Devoting himself almost entirely to prose, he speedily became known as a writer of brilliant epigrammatic essays and even more brilliant paradoxical plays, such as *An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest.* Wilde's aphorisms and flippancies were quoted everywhere; his fame as a wit was only surpassed by his notoriety as an æsthete. (See Preface.)

Most of his poems in prose (such as *The Happy Prince, The Birthday of the Infanta* and *The Fisherman and His Soul*) are more imaginative and richly colored than his verse; but in one long poem, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898), he sounded his deepest, simplest and most enduring note. Prison was, in many ways, a regeneration for Wilde. It not only produced *The Ballad of Reading Gaol,* but made possible his most poignant piece of writing, *De Profoundis,* only a small part of which has been published. *Salomé,* which has made

the author's name a household word, was originally written in French in 1892 and later translated into English by Lord Alfred Douglas, accompanied by the famous illustrations by Aubrey Beardsley. More recently, this heated drama, based on the story of Herod and Herodias, was made into an opera by Richard Strauss.

Wilde's society plays, flashing and cynical, were the forerunners of Bernard Shaw's audacious and far more searching ironies. One sees the origin of a whole school of drama in such epigrams as "The history of woman is the history of the worst form of tyranny the world has ever known: the tyranny of the weak over the strong. It is the only tyranny that lasts." Or "There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about."

Wilde died at Paris, November 30, 1900, his body being buried in the Cemetery of Bagneux. On July 20th, 1909, it was transferred to the great Cemetery of Père Lachaise, where a monument was erected to his memory.

The first of many collected editions of his *Poems* (notably the excellent Mosher volume) appeared a few years after his death.

REQUIESCAT

Tread lightly, she is near
Under the snow,
Speak gently, she can hear
The daisies grow.

All her bright golden hair
Tarnished with rust,
She that was young and fair
Fallen to dust.

Lily-like, white as snow,
She hardly knew
She was a woman, so
Sweetly she grew.

Coffin-board, heavy stone,
Lie on her breast;
I vex my heart alone,
She is at rest.

Peace, peace; she cannot hear
Lyre or sonnet;
All my life's buried here.
Heap earth upon it.

IMPRESSION DU MATIN

The Thames nocturne of blue and gold
Changed to a harmony in grey;
A barge with ochre-coloured hay
Dropt from the wharf: and chill and cold

The yellow fog came creeping down
The bridges, till the houses' walls
Seemed changed to shadows, and St. Paul's
Loomed like a bubble o'er the town.

Then suddenly arose the clang
Of waking life; the streets were stirred
With country waggons; and a bird
Flew to the glistening roofs and sang.

But one pale woman all alone,
The daylight kissing her wan hair,
Loitered beneath the gas lamps' flare,
With lips of flame and heart of stone.

HELAS

To drift with every passion till my soul
Is a stringed lute on which all winds can play,
Is it for this that I have given away
Mine ancient wisdom, and austere control?
Methinks my life is a twice-written scroll
Scrawled over on some boyish holiday
With idle songs for pipe and virelay,
Which do but mar the secret of the whole.
Surely there was a time I might have trod
The sunlit heights, and from life's dissonance
Struck one clear chord to reach the ears of God:
Is that time dead? lo! with a little rod
I did but touch the honey of romance—
And must I lose a soul's inheritance?

John Davidson

John Davidson was born at Barrhead, Renfrewshire, in 1857. His *Ballads and Songs* (1895) and *New Ballads* (1897) attained a sudden but too short-lived popularity; his great promise was quenched by an apathetic public and by his own growing disillusion and despair. Neither the later *Holiday and other Poems* (1906) nor the ambitious trilogy, *God and Mammon* (the first volume of which appeared in 1907) received anything more frenzied than polite respect. His sombre yet direct poetry never tired of repeating his favorite theme: "Man is but the Universe grown conscious." Author of some four "testaments," six plays, three novels and various collections of poems and essays, Davidson died by his own hand at Penzance in 1909.

The theme of "A Ballad of Hell" is one which has attracted many writers since the Middle Ages, but Davidson has given it a fierceness and modernity which makes the tale sound as if it had never been related before.

A BALLAD OF HELL

'A letter from my love to-day!
  Oh, unexpected, dear appeal!'
She struck a happy tear away,
  And broke the crimson seal.

'My love, there is no help on earth,
  No help in heaven; the dead-man's bell
Must toll our wedding; our first hearth
  Must be the well-paved floor of hell.'

The colour died from out her face,
  Her eyes like ghostly candles shone;
She cast dread looks about the place,
  Then clenched her teeth and read right on.

'I may not pass the prison door;
  Here must I rot from day to day,
Unless I wed whom I abhor,
  My cousin, Blanche of Valencay.

'At midnight with my dagger keen,
  I'll take my life; it must be so.
Meet me in hell to-night, my queen,
  For weal and woe.'

She laughed although her face was wan,
  She girded on her golden belt,
She took her jewelled ivory fan,
  And at her glowing missal knelt.

Then rose, 'And am I mad?' she said:
  She broke her fan, her belt untied;
With leather girt herself instead,
  And stuck a dagger at her side.

She waited, shuddering in her room,
  Till sleep had fallen on all the house.
She never flinched; she faced her doom:
  They two must sin to keep their vows.

Then out into the night she went,
  And, stooping, crept by hedge and tree;
Her rose-bush flung a snare of scent,
  And caught a happy memory.

She fell, and lay a minute's space;
  She tore the sward in her distress;
The dewy grass refreshed her face;
  She rose and ran with lifted dress.

She started like a morn-caught ghost
  Once when the moon came out and stood
To watch; the naked road she crossed,
  And dived into the murmuring wood.

The branches snatched her streaming cloak;
  A live thing shrieked; she made no stay!
She hurried to the trysting-oak—
  Right well she knew the way.

Without a pause she bared her breast,
  And drove her dagger home and fell,
And lay like one that takes her rest,
  And died and wakened up in hell.

She bathed her spirit in the flame,
And near the centre took her post;
From all sides to her ears there came
The dreary anguish of the lost.

The devil started at her side,
Comely, and tall, and black as jet.
'I am young Malespina's bride;
Has he come hither yet?'

'My poppet, welcome to your bed.'
'Is Malespina here?'
'Not he! To-morrow he must wed
His cousin Blanche, my dear!'

'You lie, he died with me to-night.'
'Not he! it was a plot' . . . 'You lie.'
'My dear, I never lie outright.'
'We died at midnight, he and I.'

The devil went. Without a groan
She, gathered up in one fierce prayer,
Took root in hell's midst all alone,
And waited for him there.

She dared to make herself at home
Amidst the wail, the uneasy stir.
The blood-stained flame that filled the dome,
Scentless and silent, shrouded her.

How long she stayed I cannot tell;
But when she felt his perfidy,
She marched across the floor of hell;
And all the damned stood up to see.

The devil stopped her at the brink:
  She shook him off; she cried, 'Away!'
'My dear, you have gone mad, I think.'
  'I was betrayed: I will not stay.'

Across the weltering deep she ran;
  A stranger thing was never seen:
The damned stood silent to a man;
  They saw the great gulf set between.

To her it seemed a meadow fair;
  And flowers sprang up about her feet.
She entered heaven; she climbed the stair
  And knelt down at the mercy-seat.

Seraphs and saints with one great voice
  Welcomed that soul that knew not fear.
Amazed to find it could rejoice,
  Hell raised a hoarse, half-human cheer.

IMAGINATION

(*From "New Year's Eve"*)

There is a dish to hold the sea,
  A brazier to contain the sun,
A compass for the galaxy,
  A voice to wake the dead and done!

That minister of ministers,
  Imagination, gathers up
The undiscovered Universe,
  Like jewels in a jasper cup.

Its flame can mingle north and south;
Its accent with the thunder strive;
The ruddy sentence of its mouth
Can make the ancient dead alive.

The mart of power, the fount of will,
The form and mould of every star,
The source and bound of good and ill,
The key of all the things that are,

Imagination, new and strange
In every age, can turn the year;
Can shift the poles and lightly change
The mood of men, the world's career.

A. Mary F. Robinson

A. Mary F. Robinson—or, as she sometimes signs herself, Madame James Darmesteter—was born at Leamington in 1857. She was educated at University College, where she specialized in Greek literature, and at various colleges in Brussels and Italy. In 1888 she married M. James Darmesteter, the famous Orientalist, who later became director of the Pasteur Institute in Paris.

The author of two novels and several volumes of verse, Mme. Robinson-Darmesteter's first volume was *A Handful of Honeysuckle* (1878). This was followed eight years later by *An Italian Garden* (1886) which attracted notable comment and won for the author an enthusiastic circle of readers. Her most characteristic later volume is *Retrospect* (1893), wherein the poet may be seen at her best in songs not unlike the early lyrics of Sara Teasdale.

RISPETTO

What good is there, ah me, what good in Love?
  Since, even if you love me, we must part;
And since for either, an' you cared enough,
  There's but division and a broken heart?

And yet, God knows, to hear you say: My Dear!
I would lie down and stretch me on the bier.
And yet would I, to hear you say: My Own!
With mine own hands drag down the burial stone.

THE PRESENT AGE

We stand upon a bridge between two stars.
  And one is half engulfed in the Abyss;
  While unarisen still the other is,
Hidden behind the Orient's cloudy bars.

We tread indeed a perilous path by night!
  Yet we who walk in darkness unaghast
  Prepare the future and redeem the past,
That after us the Morning-star be bright.

SELVA OSCURA

In a wood
  Far away,
Thrushes brood,
  Ravens prey,
Eagles circle overhead,
Through the boughs a bird drops dead.

Wild and high,
  The angry wind
Wanders by
  And cannot find
Any limit to the wood
Full of cries and solitude.

Francis Thompson

Born in 1857 at Preston, Lancashire, Francis Thompson was educated at Owen's College, Manchester. Later he tried all manner of ways of earning a living. He was, at various times, assistant in a boot-shop, medical student, collector for a book seller and homeless vagabond; there was a period in his life when he sold matches on the streets of London. He was discovered in terrible poverty (having given up everything except poetry and opium) by Wilfrid Meynell, the editor of a magazine to which he had sent some verses the year before.

Supported and befriended by Wilfrid and Alice Meynell, he broke off his opium habits (although he never regained complete health) and started to write with renewed energy. Almost immediately thereafter he became famous. His exalted mysticism is seen at its purest in "A Fallen Yew" and "The Hound of Heaven." Coventry Patmore, the distinguished poet of an earlier period, says of the latter poem, "It is one of the very few *great* odes of which our language can boast." This majestic symbol of the pursuit of God (which, as sheer music, is like one of Bach's mighty chorales) has been reprinted in so many anthologies that the present editor has thought it advisable to present a varied group of Thompson's less familiar poems in its place.

Sister Songs, following Thompson's first volume, appeared in 1895, *New Poems* in 1897. His prose, containing the famous essay on Shelley, was not collected until many years later. In all his work, he was never anyone but himself; a mystic unaware of any world but that within us—a mystic as much enraptured by strange colors, curious words (he delighted in the ring of archaic syllables) and quaint symbols as a child. The words he

applied to characterize Shelley might be used with even greater justice to describe Thompson himself: "To the last, in a degree uncommon even among poets, he retained the idiosyncrasy of childhood, expanded and matured without differentiation. To the last, he was the enchanted child."

Thompson died, after a fragile and spasmodic life, in St. John's Wood, London, in November, 1907. Since that time, several *Selected Poems* have revealed Thompson's "pomp and prodigality" to a new generation, and a *Complete Poetical Works* may be found in the inexpensive Modern Library.

DAISY

Where the thistle lifts a purple crown
    Six foot out of the turf,
And the harebell shakes on the windy hill—
    O breath of the distant surf!—

The hills look over on the South,
    And southward dreams the sea;
And with the sea-breeze hand in hand
    Came innocence and she.

Where 'mid the gorse the raspberry
    Red for the gatherer springs;
Two children did we stray and talk
    Wise, idle, childish things.

She listened with big-lipped surprise,
    Breast-deep 'mid flower and spine:
Her skin was like a grape whose veins
    Run snow instead of wine.

She knew not those sweet words she spake,
Nor knew her own sweet way;
But there's never a bird, so sweet a song
Thronged in whose throat all day.

Oh, there were flowers in Storrington
On the turf and on the spray;
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills
Was the Daisy-flower that day!

Her beauty smoothed earth's furrowed face.
She gave me tokens three:—
A look, a word of her winsome mouth,
And a wild raspberry.

A berry red, a guileless look,
A still word,—strings of sand!
And yet they made my wild, wild heart
Fly down to her little hand.

For standing artless as the air
And candid as the skies,
She took the berries with her hand
And the love with her sweet eyes.

The fairest things have fleetest end.
Their scent survives their close:
But the rose's scent is bitterness
To him that loved the rose.

She looked a little wistfully,
Then went her sunshine way:—
The sea's eye had a mist on it,
And the leaves fell from the day.

She went her unremembering way,
    She went and left in me
The pang of all the partings gone,
    And partings yet to be.

She left me marvelling why my soul
    Was sad that she was glad;
At all the sadness in the sweet,
    The sweetness in the sad.

Still, still I seemed to see her, still
    Look up with soft replies,
And take the berries with her hand,
    And the love with her lovely eyes.

Nothing begins, and nothing ends,
    That is not paid with moan,
For we are born in other's pain,
    And perish in our own.

TO A SNOWFLAKE

What heart could have thought you?—
Past our devisal
(O filigree petal!)
Fashioned so purely,
Fragilely, surely,
From what Paradisal
Imagineless metal,
Too costly for cost?
Who hammered you, wrought you,
From argentine vapour?—

"God was my shaper.
Passing surmisal,
He hammered, He wrought me,
From curled silver vapour,
To lust of his mind:—
Thou couldst not have thought me!
So purely, so palely,
Tinily, surely,
Mightily, frailly,
Insculped and embossed,
With His hammer of wind,
And His graver of frost."

A DEDICATION

(*To Wilfrid and Alice Meynell*)

If the rose in meek duty
  May dedicate humbly
To her grower the beauty
  Wherewith she is comely;
If the mine to the miner
  The jewels that pined in it;
Earth to diviner
  The springs he divined in it;
To the grapes, the wine-pitcher
  Their juice that was crushed in it;
Viol to its witcher
  The music lay hushed in it;
If the lips may pay Gladness
  In laughters she wakened,
And the heart to its sadness
  Weeping unslakened;

If the hid and sealed coffer
  Whose having not his is,
To the loosers may proffer
  Their finding—here this is.
Their lives if all livers
  To the Life of all living,—
To you, O dear givers,
  I give your own giving!

AN ARAB LOVE-SONG

The hunchèd camels of the night[1]
Trouble the bright
And silver waters of the moon.
The Maiden of the Morn will soon
Through Heaven stray and sing,
Star gathering.

Now while the dark about our loves is strewn,
Light of my dark, blood of my heart, O come!
And night will catch her breath up, and be dumb.

Leave thy father, leave thy mother
And thy brother;
Leave the black tents of thy tribe apart!
Am I not thy father and thy brother,
And thy mother?
And thou—what needest with thy tribe's black
  tents
Who hast the red pavilion of my heart?

[1] (Cloud-shapes observed by travellers in the East.)

"IN NO STRANGE LAND" [1]

O world invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee!

Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air—
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of thee there?

Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumbed conceiving soars!—
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

The angels keep their ancient places;
Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangèd faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

But, when so sad thou canst not sadder,
Cry;—and upon thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.

Yea, in the night, my Soul, my daughter,
Cry,—clinging Heaven by the hems;
And lo, Christ walking on the water
Not of Gennesareth, but Thames!

[1] These verses, unpublished during his lifetime, were found among Francis Thompson's papers after his death.

William Watson was born at Burley-in-Wharfedale, Yorkshire, August 2, 1858. He achieved his first wide success through his long and eloquent poems on Wordsworth, Shelley, and Tennyson—poems that attempted, and sometimes successfully, to combine the manners of these masters. *The Hope of the World* (1897) contains some of his most characteristic though often too rhetorical verse.

He was knighted in 1917, and it was understood that he would be appointed poet laureate upon the death of Alfred Austin. But some of his radical and semi-political poems are supposed to have displeased the powers at Court, and the honor went to Robert Bridges. His best work, which is notable for its dignity and moulded imagination, may be found in *Selected Poems,* published in 1902 by John Lane Co. His later, less interesting verse was published in *The Man Who Saw* (1917) and *The Superhuman Antagonists* (1919). A poet who, beginning with brilliant trumpets, is ending in blatant pomposities.

ODE IN MAY[1]

Let me go forth, and share
The overflowing Sun
With one wise friend, or one
Better than wise, being fair,
Where the pewit wheels and dips
On heights of bracken and ling,
And Earth, unto her leaflet tips,
Tingles with the Spring.

What is so sweet and dear
As a prosperous morn in May,
The confident prime of the day,
And the dauntless youth of the year,

[1] From *The Hope of the World* by William Watson. Copyright by Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

When nothing that asks for bliss,
Asking aright, is denied,
And half of the world a bridegroom is,
And half of the world a bride?

The Song of Mingling flows,
Grave, ceremonial, pure,
As once, from lips that endure,
The cosmic descant rose,
When the temporal lord of life,
Going his golden way,
Had taken a wondrous maid to wife
That long had said him nay.

For of old the Sun, our sire,
Came wooing the mother of men,
Earth, that was virginal then,
Vestal fire to his fire.
Silent her bosom and coy,
But the strong god sued and pressed;
And born of their starry nuptial joy
Are all that drink of her breast.

And the triumph of him that begot,
And the travail of her that bore,
Behold, they are evermore
As warp and weft in our lot.
We are children of splendour and flame,
Of shuddering, also, and tears.
Magnificent out of the dust we came,
And abject from the Spheres.

O bright irresistible lord,
We are fruit of Earth's womb, each one,

And fruit of thy loins, O Sun,
Whence first was the seed outpoured.
To thee as our Father we bow,
Forbidden thy Father to see,
Who is older and greater than thou, as
thou
Art greater and older than we.

Thou art but as a word of his speech,
Thou art but as a wave of his hand;
Thou art brief as a glitter of sand
'Twixt tide and tide on his beach;
Thou art less than a spark of his fire,
Or a moment's mood of his soul:
Thou art lost in the notes on the lips of
his choir
That chant the chant of the Whole.

ESTRANGEMENT [1]

So, without overt breach, we fall apart,
Tacitly sunder—neither you nor I
Conscious of one intelligible Why,
And both, from severance, winning equal smart.
So, with resigned and acquiescent heart,
Whene'er your name on some chance lip may lie,
I seem to see an alien shade pass by,
A spirit wherein I have no lot or part.

[1] From *The Hope of the World* by William Watson. Copyright by Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

Thus may a captive, in some fortress grim,
From casual speech betwixt his warders, learn
That June on her triumphal progress goes
Through arched and bannered woodlands; while
for him
She is a legend emptied of concern,
And idle is the rumour of the rose.

SONG

April, April,
Laugh thy girlish laughter;
Then, the moment after,
Weep thy girlish tears,
April, that mine ears
Like a lover greetest,
If I tell thee, sweetest,
All my hopes and fears.
April, April,
Laugh thy golden laughter,
But, the moment after,
Weep thy golden tears!

A. E. Housman

Alfred Edward Housman was born March 26, 1859, and, after a classical education, was, for ten years, a Higher Division Clerk in the British Patent Office. Later in life, he became a teacher, being an Honorary Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford.

Until 1922, Housman had published only one volume of original verse, but that volume (*A Shropshire Lad*) is known wherever modern English poetry is read. Originally published in 1896, when Housman was almost 37, it is evident that many

of these lyrics were written when the poet was much younger. Echoing the frank pessimism of Hardy and the harder cynicism of Heine, Housman struck a lighter and more buoyant note. Underneath his dark ironies, there is a rustic humor that has many subtle variations. From a melodic standpoint, *A Shropshire Lad* is a collection of exquisite, haunting and almost perfect songs.

After a silence of almost twenty-six years, a second volume, significantly entitled *Last Poems,* appeared in 1922. There, once more, we have the note of pessimism sung in a jaunty rhythm and an incongruously jolly key. The Shropshire Lad lives again to pipe his mournful tunes of betrayal, lovesick lads, deserted girls and suicides with an enviable simplicity and an almost flawless command of his instrument.

Housman has been a professor of Latin, at University College (London) and at Cambridge since 1892 and, besides his immortal set of lyrics, has edited Juvenal and the books of Manilius.

REVEILLÉ

Wake: the silver dusk returning
  Up the beach of darkness brims,
And the ship of sunrise burning
  Strands upon the eastern rims.

Wake: the vaulted shadow shatters,
  Trampled to the floor it spanned,
And the tent of night in tatters
  Straws the sky-pavilioned land.

Up, lad, up, 'tis late for lying:
  Hear the drums of morning play;
Hark, the empty highways crying
  "Who'll beyond the hills away?"

Towns and countries woo together,
  Forelands beacon, belfries call;
Never lad that trod on leather
  Lived to feast his heart with all.

Up, lad: thews that lie and cumber
  Sunlit pallets never thrive;
Morns abed and daylight slumber
  Were not meant for man alive.

Clay lies still, but blood's a rover;
  Breath's a ware that will not keep.
Up, lad: when the journey's over
  There'll be time enough to sleep.

WHEN I WAS ONE-AND-TWENTY

When I was one-and-twenty
  I heard a wise man say,
"Give crowns and pounds and guineas
  But not your heart away;
Give pearls away and rubies
  But keep your fancy free."
But I was one-and-twenty,
  No use to talk to me.

When I was one-and-twenty
  I heard him say again,
"The heart out of the bosom
  Was never given in vain;
'Tis paid with sighs a-plenty
  And sold for endless rue."
And I am two-and-twenty,
  And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.

"WITH RUE MY HEART IS LADEN"

With rue my heart is laden
For golden friends I had,
For many a rose-lipt maiden
And many a lightfoot lad.

By brooks too broad for leaping
The lightfoot boys are laid;
The rose-lipt girls are sleeping
In fields where roses fade.

TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG

The time you won your town the race
We chaired you through the market-place;
Man and boy stood cheering by,
And home we brought you shoulder-high.

To-day, the road all runners come,
Shoulder-high we bring you home,
And set you at your threshold down,
Townsman of a stiller town.

Smart lad, to slip betimes away
From fields where glory does not stay,
And early though the laurel grows
It withers quicker than the rose.

Eyes the shady night has shut
Cannot see the record cut,
And silence sounds no worse than cheers
After earth has stopped the ears:

Now you will not swell the rout
Of lads that wore their honours out,
Runners whom renown outran
And the name died before the man.

So set, before its echoes fade,
The fleet foot on the sill of shade,
And hold to the low lintel up
The still-defended challenge-cup.

And round that early-laurelled head
Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,
And find unwithered on its curls
The garland briefer than a girl's.

"LOVELIEST OF TREES"

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

THE DEAD LOVER

'Is my team ploughing,
  That I was used to drive
And hear the harness jingle
  When I was man alive?'

Ay, the horses trample,
  The harness jingles now;
No change though you lie under
  The land you used to plough.

'Is football playing
  Along the river shore,
With lads to chase the leather,
  Now I stand up no more?'

Ay, the ball is flying,
  The lads play heart and soul;
The goal stands up, the keeper
  Stands up to keep the goal.

'Is my girl happy,
  That I thought hard to leave,
And has she tired of weeping
  As she lies down at eve?'

Ay, she lies down lightly,
  She lies not down to weep:
Your girl is well contented.
  Be still, my lad, and sleep.

'Is my friend hearty,
  Now I am thin and pine;
And has he found to sleep in
  A better bed than mine?'

Ay, lad, I lie easy,
  I lie as lads would choose;
I cheer a dead man's sweetheart.
  Never ask me whose.

Douglas Hyde

Doctor Douglas Hyde was born in Roscommon County, Ireland, in, as nearly as can be ascertained, 1860. One of the most brilliant Irish scholars of his day, he has worked indefatigably for the cause of his native letters. He has written a comprehensive history of Irish literature; has compiled, edited and translated into English the *Love Songs of Connaught;* is President of The Irish National Literary Society; and is the author of innumerable poems in Gaelic—far more than he ever wrote in English. His collections of Irish folk-lore and poetry were among the most notable contributions to the Celtic revival; they were (see Preface), to a large extent, responsible for it. Since 1909 he has been Professor of Modern Irish in University College, Dublin.

The poem which is here quoted is one of his many brilliant and reanimating translations. In its music and its peculiar rhyme-scheme, it reproduces the peculiar flavor as well as the meter of the West Irish original.

I SHALL NOT DIE FOR THEE

For thee, I shall not die,
  Woman of high fame and name;
Foolish men thou mayest slay.
  I and they are not the same.

Why should I expire
For the fire of an eye,
Slender waist or swan-like limb,
Is't for them that I should die?

The round breasts, the fresh skin,
Cheeks crimson, hair so long and rich;
Indeed, indeed, I shall not die,
Please God, not I, for any such.

The golden hair, the forehead thin,
The chaste mien, the gracious ease,
The rounded heel, the languid tone,—
Fools alone find death from these.

Thy sharp wit, thy perfect calm,
Thy thin palm like foam o' the sea;
Thy white neck, thy blue eye,
I shall not die for thee.

Woman, graceful as the swan,
A wise man did nurture me.
Little palm, white neck, bright eye,
I shall not die for ye.

Amy Levy

Amy Levy, a singularly gifted Jewess, was born at Clapham, in 1861. A fiery young poet, she burdened her own difficulties with the brooding sorrows of her race. She wrote one novel, *Reuben Sachs,* and two volumes of poetry—the more distinctive of the two being half-pathetically and half-ironically entitled *A Minor Poet* (1884). After several years of tragic introspection, she committed suicide in 1889 at the age of 28. Her "Epitaph" is a bitter snatch of self-revelation.

EPITAPH

(*On a commonplace person who died in bed*)

This is the end of him, here he lies:
The dust in his throat, the worm in his eyes,
The mould in his mouth, the turf on his breast;
This is the end of him, this is best.
He will never lie on his couch awake,
Wide-eyed, tearless, till dim daybreak.
Never again will he smile and smile
When his heart is breaking all the while.
He will never stretch out his hands in vain
Groping and groping—never again.
Never ask for bread, get a stone instead,
Never pretend that the stone is bread;
Nor sway and sway 'twixt the false and true,
Weighing and noting the long hours through.
Never ache and ache with the choked-up sighs . . .
This is the end of him, here he lies.

IN THE MILE END ROAD

How like her! But 'tis she herself,
Comes up the crowded street!
How little did I think, this morn,
My only love to meet!

Who else that motion and that mien?
Whose else that airy tread?
For one strange moment I forgot
My only love was dead.

Katharine Tynan was born at Dublin in 1861, and educated at the Convent of St. Catherine at Drogheda. She married Henry Hinkson, a lawyer and author, in 1893. Her poetry is largely actuated by religious themes, and much of her verse is devotional yet distinctive. She was one of the members though not one of the leaders of the Irish Renaissance.

Although she has written many novels, miracle plays, memoirs and books of verse, she is at her best in *New Poems* (1911). The lines are graceful and meditative, with occasional notes of deep pathos. Of the more recent volumes, the most interesting are *Flower of Youth* (1914) and *Late Songs* (1917).

SHEEP AND LAMBS

All in the April morning,
  April airs were abroad;
The sheep with their little lambs
  Pass'd me by on the road.

The sheep with their little lambs
  Pass'd me by on the road;
All in an April evening
  I thought on the Lamb of God.

The lambs were weary, and crying
  With a weak human cry;
I thought on the Lamb of God
  Going meekly to die.

Up in the blue, blue mountains
  Dewy pastures are sweet:
Rest for the little bodies,
  Rest for the little feet.

Rest for the Lamb of God
  Up on the hill-top green;
Only a cross of shame
  Two stark crosses between.

All in the April evening,
  April airs were abroad;
I saw the sheep with their lambs,
  And thought on the Lamb of God.

ALL SOULS

The door of Heaven is on the latch
  To-night, and many a one is fain
To go home for one's night's watch
  With his love again.

Oh, where the father and mother sit
  There's a drift of dead leaves at the door
Like pitter-patter of little feet
  That come no more.

Their thoughts are in the night and cold,
  Their tears are heavier than the clay,
But who is this at the threshold
  So young and gay?

They are come from the land o' the young,
  They have forgotten how to weep;
Words of comfort on the tongue,
  And a kiss to keep.

They sit down and they stay awhile,
  Kisses and comfort none shall lack;
At morn they steal forth with a smile
  And a long look back.

Owen Seaman

One of the most popular of contemporary English versifiers, Owen Seaman, was born in 1861. After receiving a classical education, he became Professor of Literature and began to write for Punch in 1894. In 1906 he was made editor of that internationally famous weekly, remaining in that capacity ever since. He was knighted in 1914. As a writer of light verse and as a parodist, his agile work has delighted a generation of admirers. Some of his most adroit lines may be found in his *In Cap and Bells* (1899) and *The Battle of the Bays* (1896). The serious verse in *War Time* (1915) and the later volumes reveals a much weaker talent, a capacity for rhyme that has little to recommend itself beyond a certain neatness of execution.

TO AN OLD FOGEY

(*Who Contends that Christmas is Played Out*)

O frankly bald and obviously stout!
  And so you find that Christmas as a fête
Dispassionately viewed, is getting out
  Of date.

The studied festal air is overdone;
  The humour of it grows a little thin;
You fail, in fact, to gather where the fun
  Comes in.

Visions of very heavy meals arise
That tend to make your organism shiver;
Roast beef that irks, and pies that agonise
The liver;

Those pies at which you annually wince,
Hearing the tale how happy months will follow
Proportioned to the total mass of mince
You swallow.

Visions of youth whose reverence is scant,
Who with the brutal *verve* of boyhood's prime
Insist on being taken to the pant-
-omime.

Of infants, sitting up extremely late,
Who run you on toboggans down the stair;
Or make you fetch a rug and simulate
A bear.

This takes your faultless trousers at the knees,
The other hurts them rather more behind;
And both effect a fracture in your ease
Of mind.

My good dyspeptic, this will never do;
Your weary withers must be sadly wrung!
Yet once I well believe that even you
Were young.

Time was when you devoured, like other boys,
Plum-pudding sequent on a turkey-hen;
With cracker-mottos hinting of the joys
Of men.

Time was when 'mid the maidens you would pull
The fiery raisin with profound delight;
When sprigs of mistletoe seemed beautiful
And right.

Old Christmas changes not! Long, long ago
He won the treasure of eternal youth;
Yours is the dotage—if you want to know
The truth.

Come, now, I'll cure your case, and ask no fee:—
Make others' happiness this once your own;
All else may pass: that joy can never be
Outgrown!

Norman Gale

Norman Gale was born in Kew, Surrey, in 1862. He was educated at Oxford and became a teacher by profession. Since 1892, he has devoted all his time to literature, publishing some eight volumes of pleasantly rustic verse. The nature of his poetry may be gathered from the titles of some of his books: *A Country Muse* (1892), *Orchard Songs* (1893), *A Verdant Country* (1894). A *Collected Poems* was published in 1914.

THE COUNTRY FAITH

Here in the country's heart
Where the grass is green
Life is the same sweet life
As it ever has been.

Trust in a God still lives,
And the bell at morn
Floats with the thought of God
Over the rising corn.

God comes down in the rain,
And the crop grows tall—
This is the country faith,
And the best of all!

Henry Newbolt

Henry (John) Newbolt was born at Bilston in 1862 and educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He was called to the Bar in 1887 but retired from practice in 1899.

After editing *The Monthly Review,* he devoted all his time to literature. His early work was frankly imitative of Tennyson; he even attempted to add to the Arthurian legends with a drama in blank verse entitled *Mordred* (1895). It was not until he wrote his sea-ballads that he struck his own note. With the publication of *Admirals All* (1897) his fame was widespread. The popularity of his lines was due not so much to the subject-matter of Newbolt's verse as to the breeziness of his music, the solid beat of rhythm, the vigorous swing of his stanzas.

In 1898 Newbolt published *The Island Race,* which contains about thirty more of his buoyant songs of the sea. Besides being a poet, Newbolt has written many essays; his critical volume, *A New Study of English Poetry* (1917), is a collection of articles that are both analytical and alive.

DRAKE'S DRUM

Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.

Yarnder lumes the island, yarnder lie the ships,
Wi' sailor lads a-dancin' heel-an'-toe,
An' the shore-lights flashin', an' the night-tide dashin'
He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.

Drake he was a Devon man, an' ruled the Devon seas,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Rovin' tho' his death fell, he went wi' heart at ease,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe,
"Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them
long ago."

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas come.
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Slung atween the round shot, listenin' for the drum,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
Call him when ye sail to meet the foe;
Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag flyin',
They shall find him, ware an' wakin', as they found
him long ago.

Victor Plarr

Victor (Gustave) Plarr was born June 21, 1863, near Strasbourg and came to Scotland at the age of seven, his father's house having been burnt in the Franco-German war of 1870. He was educated at St. Andrew's, studied medicine and, in 1897, became the librarian of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

Plarr was one of the less conspicuous members of that literary group which made the Nineties so famous. He was one of the founders of the Rhymers' Club and appeared in both volumes of its selected poems. His own collection, *In the Dorian Mood,* appeared in 1896. Although most of his lines scarcely rise above the level of competent verse-making, the tiny epitaph here reprinted bids fair to survive Plarr's more ambitious but far less successful poetry.

EPITAPHIUM CITHARISTRIÆ

Stand not uttering sedately
  Trite oblivious praise above her!
Rather say you saw her lately
  Lightly kissing her last lover.

Whisper not, "There is a reason
  Why we bring her no white blossom":
Since the snowy bloom's in season
  Strow it on her sleeping bosom:

Oh, for it would be a pity
  To o'erpraise her or to flout her:
She was wild, and sweet, and witty—
  Let's not say dull things about her.

A. T. Quiller-Couch

Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch ("Q") was born in Bodwin, Cornwall, in 1863. Although his reputation rests chiefly on his skill as editor (he compiled *The Oxford Book of English Verse* in 1900 and *The Oxford Book of Ballads* a few years later), Quiller-Couch has a large following in his dual rôle of lecturer and romancer. The semi-narrative lyrics are the best features

of his three volumes of verse: *Green Bays* (1893), *Poems and Ballads* (1896) and *The Vigil of Venus* (1912).

THE WHITE MOTH

If a leaf rustled, she would start:
And yet she died a year ago.
How had so frail a thing the heart
To journey where she trembled so?
And do they turn and turn in fright,
Those little feet, in so much night?

The light above the poet's head
Streamed on the page and on the cloth,
And twice and thrice there buffeted
On the black pane a white-winged moth:
'Twas Annie's soul that beat outside
And "Open, open, open!" cried:

"I could not find the way to God;
There were too many flaming suns
For signposts, and the fearful road
Led over wastes where millions
Of tangled comets hissed and burned—
I was bewildered and I turned.

"O, it was easy then! I knew
Your window and no star beside.
Look up, and take me back to you!"
—He rose and thrust the window wide.
'Twas but because his brain was hot
With rhyming, for he heard her not.

But poets polishing a phrase
  Show anger over trivial things;
And as she blundered in the blaze
  Towards him, on ecstatic wings,
He raised a hand and smote her dead;
Then wrote *"That I had died instead!"*

Arthur Symons

Born in 1865 in Wales, of Cornish parents, Arthur Symons was educated at private schools and was attracted at an early age to the Symbolist movement, of which he became one of the leaders in England. His first few publications reveal an intellectual rather than an emotional passion. Those volumes—*Days and Nights* (1889), *Silhouettes* (1892), *London Nights* (1895)—are full of the artifice of the period, but Symons's technical skill and frequent analysis often save the poems from complete decadence. His later books are less imitative; the influence of Verlaine and Baudelaire is not so apparent. The scent of patchouli, the breath of heavy, narcotic blossoms still cling to many of the pages, but there is no longer the obsession with strange sensations, with what might be called the Deadly Nightshade school of poetry.

The best of Symons' poems have a rare delicacy of touch; they breathe an intimacy in which the sophistication is less cynical, the sensuousness more restrained. His various collections of essays and stories reflect the same peculiar blend of intellectuality and perfumed romanticism that one finds in his poems.

Of his many volumes in prose, *Spiritual Adventures* (1905), while obviously influenced by Walter Pater, is by far the most original; an undeservedly neglected volume of psychological short stories. The most of his poetry up to 1902 was collected in two volumes, *Poems,* published by John Lane Co. *The Fool of the World* appeared in 1907, his dramatic *Tragedies* in 1916.

IN THE WOOD OF FINVARA

I have grown tired of sorrow and human tears:
Life is a dream in the night, a fear among fears,
A naked runner lost in a storm of spears.

I have grown tired of rapture and love's desire:
Love is a flaming heart, and its flames aspire
Till they cloud the soul in the smoke of a windy fire.

I would wash the dust of the world in a soft green
flood;
Here between sea and sea, in the fairy wood,
I have found a delicate, wave-green solitude.

Here, in the fairy wood, between sea and sea,
I have heard the song of a fairy bird in a tree,
And the peace that is not in the world has flown to me.

MODERN BEAUTY

I am the torch, she saith, and what to me
If the moth die of me? I am the flame
Of Beauty, and I burn that all may see
Beauty, and I have neither joy nor shame,
But live with that clear light of perfect fire
Which is to men the death of their desire.

I am Yseult and Helen. I have seen
Troy burn, and the most loving knight lie dead.
The world has been my mirror, time has been
My breath upon the glass; and men have said,
Age after age, in rapture and despair,
Love's poor few words before my image there.

I live, and am immortal; in my eyes
The sorrow of the world, and on my lips
The joy of life, mingle to make me wise;
Yet now the day is darkened with eclipse:
Who is there still lives for beauty? Still am I
The torch, but where's the moth that still dares die?

THE CRYING OF WATER

O water, voice of my heart, crying in the sand,
All night long crying with a mournful cry,
As I lie and listen, and cannot understand
The voice of my heart in my side or the voice of the sea,
O water crying for rest, is it I, is it I?
All night long the water is crying to me.

Unresting water, there shall never be rest
Till the last moon drop and the last tide fail,
And the fire of the end begin to burn in the west;
And the heart shall be weary and wonder and cry like the sea,
All life long crying without avail,
As the water all night long is crying to me.

NIGHT

The night's held breath,
And the stars' steady eyes:
Is it sleep, is it death,
In the earth, in the skies?

In my heart of hope,
In my restless will,
There is that should not stop
Though the earth stood still,

Though the heavens shook aghast,
As the frost shakes a tree,
And a strong wind cast
The stars in the sea.

William Butler Yeats

Born at Sandymount, Dublin, in 1865, the son of John B. Yeats, the Irish artist, the greater part of William Butler Yeats' childhood was spent in Sligo. Here he became imbued with the power and richness of native folk-lore; he drank in the racy quality through the quaint fairy stories and old wives' tales of the Irish peasantry. (Later he published a collection of these same stories.) He was educated at Godolphin School, Hammersmith, and Erasmus Smith School, Dublin, and devoted much of his student life to the study of art.

It was in the activities of a "Young Ireland" society that Yeats became identified with the new spirit; he dreamed of a national poetry that would be written in simple English and yet would be definitely Irish. In a few years he became one of the leaders in the Celtic revival. He worked incessantly for the cause, both as propagandist and playwright; and, though his mysticism at times seemed the product of a cult, his symbolic dramas were acknowledged to be full of a haunting, other-world spirituality. (See Preface.) *The Hour Glass* (1904), his second volume of plays, includes his best one-act dramas with the exception of the unforgettable *The Land of Heart's Desire* (1894). His collected dramas were published in one volume, *Plays for an Irish Theatre,* in 1913.

Others who followed Yeats have intensified the Irish drama; they have established a closer contact between the peasant and poet. No one, however, has had so great a part in the actual

shaping of modern drama in Ireland as Yeats. His *Deirdre* (1907), a beautiful retelling of the great Gaelic legend, is far more dramatic than the earlier plays; it is particularly interesting to read with Synge's more idiomatic play on the same theme, *Deirdre of the Sorrows.*

It was as a lyricist that Yeats began his career, his first printed work being *Mosada, A Poem,* a rare booklet of which less than one hundred copies were issued in 1886. But it was with *The Countess Kathleen and Various Legends and Lyrics* (1892) that Yeats became a prominent figure in the Irish renaissance. Since that date, he has published more than forty volumes of prose, plays and poetry, although he spends more time than any writer, with the possible exception of George Moore, revising and rewriting his work. None of his books are without his particular beauty, a transformation of old themes into a personal music, and all of them are enriched by the turns of a mind both philosophic and fanciful. If one had to select only a few of these lavish volumes, the choice would probably be the early *Poems* (1895), *The Wind Among the Reeds* (1899), *Poems 1899-1905, The Wild Swans at Coole* (1917) and *Later Poems* (1922). A definitive *Collected Works* in six volumes was published by The Macmillan Company in 1924. This age has produced few lyrics more haunting than his, few indeed as musical as those here reprinted.

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes
dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the
cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

ÆDH WISHES FOR THE CLOTHS OF HEAVEN

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half-light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

THE SONG OF WANDERING ÆNGUS

I went out to the hazel wood,
Because a fire was in my head,
And cut and peeled a hazel wand,
And hooked a berry to a thread,
And when white moths were on the wing,
And moth-like stars were flickering out,
I dropped the berry in a stream
And caught a little silver trout.

When I had laid it on the floor
I went to blow the fire a-flame,
But something rustled on the floor,
And someone called me by my name:

It had become a glimmering girl
With apple blossoms in her hair
Who called me by my name and ran
And faded through the brightening air.

Though I am old with wandering
Through hollow lands and hilly lands,
I will find out where she has gone,
And kiss her lips and take her hands;
And walk among long dappled grass,
And pluck till time and times are done,
The silver apples of the moon,
The golden apples of the sun.

THE CAP AND BELLS

A Queen was beloved by a jester,
  And once when the owls grew still
He made his soul go upward
  And stand on her window sill.

In a long and straight blue garment,
  It talked before morn was white,
And it had grown wise by thinking
  Of a footfall hushed and light.

But the young queen would not listen;
  She rose in her pale nightgown,
She drew in the brightening casement
  And pushed the brass bolt down.

He bade his heart go to her,
  When the bats cried out no more,
In a red and quivering garment
  It sang to her through the door.

The tongue of it sweet with dreaming
  Of a flutter of flower-like hair,
But she took up her fan from the table
  And waved it off on the air.

'I've cap and bells,' he pondered,
  'I will send them to her and die.'
And as soon as the morn had whitened
  He left them where she went by.

She laid them upon her bosom,
  Under a cloud of her hair,
And her red lips sang them a love song.
  The stars grew out of the air.

She opened her door and her window,
  And the heart and the soul came through,
To her right hand came the red one,
  To her left hand came the blue.

They set up a noise like crickets,
  A chattering wise and sweet,
And her hair was a folded flower,
  And the quiet of love her feet.

AN OLD SONG RESUNG[1]

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;
She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

[1] "This," Yeats wrote in a footnote in one of the early editions, "is an extension of three lines sung to me by an old woman of Ballisodare."

In a field by the river my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

THE ROSE OF THE WORLD

Who dreamed that beauty passes like a dream?
For these red lips, with all their mournful pride,
Mournful that no new wonder may betide,
Troy passed away in one high funeral gleam,
And Usna's children died.

We and the labouring world are passing by:
Amid men's souls, that waver and give place,
Like the pale waters in their wintry race,
Under the passing stars, frame of the sky,
Lives on this lonely face.

Bow down, archangels, in your dim abode:
Before you were, or any hearts to beat,
Weary and kind, one lingered by His seat;
He made the world to be a grassy road
Before her wandering feet.

Herbert Trench

(Frederic) Herbert Trench was born in November, 1865, at Avoncore, County Cork, Ireland. He was educated at Haileybury and Oxford, became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and was Director of Special Enquiries at the Board of Education, from which he retired in 1908. After his extensive

travels, he devoted himself entirely to literature, although he was at one time Director of the Haymarket Theatre. He died in July, 1923.

Although the greater part of his work is an attempt to scale profound heights, his poetry in "the grand manner" is rarely impressive; it is noble in intention but ineffectual as communication. Trench's all too frequent excursions into the realm of the metaphysical achieved far less than a few of his unambitious lyrics. Rid of his nebular philosophy, the shorter verses shine with a natural clarity. The best of these may be found in *Deirdre Wedded* (1900) and *Lyrics and Narrative Poems* (1911). *Selected Poems* as well as *The Complete Works of Herbert Trench,* edited by Harold Williams, were published in 1924.

I HEARD A SOLDIER

I heard a soldier sing some trifle
  Out in the sun-dried veldt alone.
He lay and cleaned his grimy rifle
  Idly, behind a stone.

"If after death, love, comes a waking,
  And in their camp so dark and still
The men of dust hear bugles, breaking
  Their halt upon the hill,

"To me the slow and silver pealing
  That then the last high trumpet pours,
Shall softer than the dawn come stealing,
  For, with its call, comes yours!"

What grief of love had he to stifle,
  Basking so idly by his stone,
That grimy soldier with his rifle
  Out in the veldt, alone?

SONG

She comes not when Noon is on the roses—
Too bright is Day.
She comes not to the soul till it reposes
From work and play.

But when Night is on the hills, and the great voices
Roll in from sea,
By starlight and by candlelight and dreamlight
She comes to me.

Rudyard Kipling

Born at Bombay, India, December 30, 1865, (Joseph) Rudyard Kipling, the author of a dozen contemporary classics, was educated at the United Services College in England. He returned, however, to India and took a position on the staff of "The Lahore Civil and Military Gazette," writing for the Indian press until about 1890, when he went to England, where, with the exception of a short sojourn in America, he has lived ever since.

Even while he was still in India, he achieved a popular as well as a literary success with his dramatic and skilful tales and ballads of Anglo-Indian life.

Soldiers Three (1888) was the first of six collections of short stories brought out in "Wheeler's Railway Library." They were followed by the more sensitive and searching *Plain Tales from the Hills, Under the Deodars* and *The Phantom 'Rikshaw,* which contains two of the best and most convincing ghost-stories in recent literature.

These tales, however, display only one side of Kipling's extraordinary talents. As a writer of children's stories, he has few living equals. *Wee Willie Winkie,* which contains that stirring and heroic fragment "Drums of the Fore and Aft," is

only a trifle less notable than his more obviously juvenile collections. *Just-So Stories* and the two *Jungle Books* (prose interspersed with lively rhymes) are classics for young people of all ages. *Kim,* the novel of a super-Mowgli grown up, is a more mature masterpiece painted against the background of the great Indian roads.

Considered solely as a poet (see Preface), Kipling is one of the most vigorous and certain figures of his time. The spirit of romance surges under his realities. His brisk lines conjure up the tang of a countryside in autumn, the tingle of salt spray, the rude sentiment of ruder natures, the snapping of a banner, the lurch and rumble of the sea. His poetry is woven of the stuff of myths, but it never loses its hold on actualities. Kipling himself in his poem "The Benefactors" (from *The Years Between* [1919]) writes:

> Ah! What avails the classic bent
> And what the cultured word,
> Against the undoctored incident
> That actually occurred?

Yet it was scarcely his realism that made him so popular. What attracted the average reader to Kipling was his attitude to the world's work. Where others sang of lilies and leisure, Kipling celebrated difficulties, duty, hard labor; where others evoked Greek nymphs, he hailed bridge-builders, engineers, sweating stokers—all those who exulted in the job.

Kipling won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907. His varied poems have finally been collected in a remarkable one-volume *Inclusive Edition* (1885-1918), an indispensable part of any student's library. Subsequent to this collection, a new volume, *The Years Between,* was published in 1919. This gifted and prolific creator, whose work was adversely affected by the war, has frequently lapsed into bombast and journalistic imperialism. At his best, however, he is unforgettable, standing mountain-high above his host of imitators. His home is at Burwash, Sussex.

GUNGA DIN

You may talk o' gin an' beer
When you're quartered safe out 'ere,
An' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot it;
But when it comes to slaughter
You will do your work on water,
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im that's got it.
Now in Injia's sunny clime,
Where I used to spend my time
A-servin' of 'Er Majesty the Queen,
Of all them black-faced crew
The finest man I knew
Was our regimental *bhisti,*[1] Gunga Din.

It was "Din! Din! Din!
You limping lump o' brick-dust, Gunga Din!
Hi! *slippy hitherao!*
Water, get it! *Panee lao!*[2]
You squidgy-nosed old idol, Gunga Din!"

The uniform 'e wore
Was nothin' much before,
An' rather less than 'arf o' that be'ind,
For a twisty piece o' rag
An' a goatskin water-bag
Was all the field-equipment 'e could find.
When the sweatin' troop-train lay
In a sidin' through the day,

[1] The *bhisti,* or water-carrier, attached to regiments in India, is often one of the most devoted of the Queen's servants. He is also appreciated by the men.

[2] Bring water swiftly.

Where the 'eat would make your bloomin' eyebrows crawl,
We shouted *"Harry By!"* [1]
Till our throats were bricky-dry,
Then we wopped 'im 'cause 'e couldn't serve us all.

It was "Din! Din! Din!
You 'eathen, where the mischief 'ave you been?
You put some *juldee* [2] in it,
Or I'll *marrow* [3] you this minute,
If you don't fill up my helmet, Gunga Din!"

'E would dot an' carry one
Till the longest day was done,
An' 'e didn't seem to know the use o' fear.
If we charged or broke or cut,
You could bet your bloomin' nut,
'E'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear.
With 'is *mussick* [4] on 'is back,
'E would skip with our attack,
An' watch us till the bugles made "Retire."
An' for all 'is dirty 'ide,
'E was white, clear white, inside
When 'e went to tend the wounded under fire!

It was "Din! Din! Din!"
With the bullets kickin' dust-spots on the green.
When the cartridges ran out,
You could 'ear the front-files shout:
"Hi! ammunition-mules an' Gunga Din!"

[1] Tommy Atkins' equivalent for "O Brother!"
[2] Speed. [3] Hit you. [4] Water-skin.

I sha'n't forgit the night
When I dropped be'ind the fight
With a bullet where my belt-plate should 'a' been.
I was chokin' mad with thirst,
An' the man that spied me first
Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga Din.
'E lifted up my 'ead,
An' 'e plugged me where I bled,
An' 'e guv me 'arf-a-pint o' water—green;
It was crawlin' an' it stunk,
But of all the drinks I've drunk,
I'm gratefullest to one from Gunga Din.

It was "Din! Din! Din!
'Ere's a beggar with a bullet through 'is
spleen;
'E's chawin' up the ground an' 'e's kickin'
all around:
For Gawd's sake, git the water, Gunga
Din!"

'E carried me away
To where a *dooli* lay,
An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar clean.
'E put me safe inside,
An' just before 'e died:
"I 'ope you liked your drink," sez Gunga Din.
So I'll meet 'im later on
In the place where 'e is gone—
Where it's always double drill and no canteen;
'E'll be squattin' on the coals
Givin' drink to pore damned souls,
An' I'll get a swig in Hell from Gunga Din!

Din! Din! Din!
You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din!
Tho' I've belted you an' flayed you,
By the livin' Gawd that made you,
You're a better man than I am, Gunga
Din!

THE RETURN[1]

Peace is declared, and I return
To 'Ackneystadt, but not the same;
Things 'ave transpired which made me learn
The size and meanin' of the game.
I did no more than others did,
I don't know where the change began;
I started as a average kid,
I finished as a thinkin' man.

If England was what England seems
An' not the England of our dreams,
But only putty, brass, an' paint,
'Ow quick we'd drop 'er! But she ain't!

Before my gappin' mouth could speak
I 'eard it in my comrade's tone;
I saw it on my neighbour's cheek
Before I felt it flush my own.
An' last it come to me—not pride,
Nor yet conceit, but on the 'ole
(If such a term may be applied),
The makin's of a bloomin' soul.

[1] From *The Five Nations* by Rudyard Kipling. Copyright by Doubleday, Page & Co. and A. P. Watt & Son.

Rivers at night that cluck an' jeer,
  Plains which the moonshine turns to sea,
Mountains that never let you near,
  An' stars to all eternity;
An' the quick-breathin' dark that fills
  The 'ollows of the wilderness,
When the wind worries through the 'ills—
  These may 'ave taught me more or less.

Towns without people, ten times took,
  An' ten times left an' burned at last;
An' starvin' dogs that come to look
  For owners when a column passed;
An' quiet, 'omesick talks between
  Men, met by night, you never knew
Until—'is face—by shellfire seen—
  Once—an' struck off. They taught me, too.

The day's lay-out—the mornin' sun
  Beneath your 'at-brim as you sight;
The dinner-'ush from noon till one,
  An' the full roar that lasts till night;
An' the pore dead that look so old
  An' was so young an hour ago,
An' legs tied down before they're cold—
  These are the things which make you know.

Also Time runnin' into years—
  A thousand Places left be'ind—
An' Men from both two 'emispheres
  Discussin' things of every kind;
So much more near than I 'ad known,
  So much more great than I 'ad guessed—
An' me, like all the rest, alone—
  But reachin' out to all the rest!

So 'ath it come to me—not pride,
  Nor yet conceit, but on the 'ole
(If such a term may be applied)
  The makin's of a bloomin' soul.
But now, discharged, I fall away
  To do with little things again. . . .
Gawd, 'oo knows all I cannot say,
  Look after me in Thamesfontein!

If England was what England seems
  An' not the England of our dreams,
But only putty, brass, an' paint,
  'Ow quick we'd chuck 'er! But she ain't!

THE CONUNDRUM OF THE WORKSHOPS

When the flush of a newborn sun fell first on Eden's
  green and gold,
Our father Adam sat under the Tree and scratched with
  a stick in the mold;
And the first rude sketch that the world had seen was
  joy to his mighty heart,
Till the Devil whispered behind the leaves: "It's pretty,
  but is it Art?"

Wherefore he called to his wife and fled to fashion his
  work anew—
The first of his race who cared a fig for the first, most
  dread review;
And he left his lore to the use of his sons—and that was
  a glorious gain
When the Devil chuckled: "Is it Art?" in the ear of the
  branded Cain.

They builded a tower to shiver the sky and wrench the stars apart,
Till the Devil grunted behind the bricks: "It's striking, but is it Art?"
The stone was dropped by the quarry-side, and the idle derrick swung,
While each man talked of the aims of art, and each in an alien tongue.

They fought and they talked in the north and the south, they talked and they fought in the west,
Till the waters rose on the jabbering land, and the poor Red Clay had rest—
Had rest till the dank blank-canvas dawn when the dove was preened to start,
And the Devil bubbled below the keel: "It's human, but is it Art?"

The tale is old as the Eden Tree—as new as the new-cut tooth—
For each man knows ere his lip-thatch grows he is master of Art and Truth;
And each man hears as the twilight nears, to the beat of his dying heart,
The Devil drum on the darkened pane: "You did it, but was it Art?"

We have learned to whittle the Eden Tree to the shape of a surplice-peg,
We have learned to bottle our parents twain in the yolk of an addled egg,
We know that the tail must wag the dog, as the horse is drawn by the cart;
But the Devil whoops, as he whooped of old: "It's clever, but is it Art?"

When the flicker of London's sun falls faint on the club-room's green and gold,
The sons of Adam sit them down and scratch with their pens in the mold—
They scratch with their pens in the mold of their graves, and the ink and the anguish start
When the Devil mutters behind the leaves: "It's pretty, but is it Art?"

Now, if we could win to the Eden Tree where the four great rivers flow,
And the wreath of Eve is red on the turf as she left it long ago,
And if we could come when the sentry slept, and softly scurry through,
By the favor of God we might know as much—as our father Adam knew.

AN ASTROLOGER'S SONG[1]

To the Heavens above us
  Oh, look and behold
The Planets that love us
  All harnessed in gold!
What chariots, what horses
  Against us shall bide
While the Stars in their courses
  Do fight on our side?

All thought, all desires,
  That are under the sun,
Are one with their fires,
  As we also are one:

[1] From *Rewards and Fairies* by Rudyard Kipling. Copyright by Doubleday, Page & Co. and A. P. Watt & Son.

All matter, all spirit,
  All fashion, all frame,
Receive and inherit
  Their strength from the same.

(Oh, man that deniest
  All power save thine own,
Their power in the highest
  Is mightily shown.
Not less in the lowest
  That power is made clear.
Oh, man, if thou knowest,
  What treasure is here!)

Earth quakes in her throes
  And we wonder for why!
But the blind planet knows
  When her ruler is nigh;
And, attuned since Creation
  To perfect accord,
She thrills in her station
  And yearns to her Lord.

The waters have risen,
  The springs are unbound—
The floods break their prison,
  And ravin around.
No rampart withstands 'em,
  Their fury will last,
Till the Sign that commands 'em
  Sinks low or swings past.

Through abysses unproven
  And gulfs beyond thought,
Our portion is woven,
  Our burden is brought.
Yet They that prepare it,
  Whose Nature we share,
Make us who must bear it
  Well able to bear.

Though terrors o'ertake us
  We'll not be afraid.
No power can unmake us
  Save that which has made.
Nor yet beyond reason
  Or hope shall we fall—
All things have their season,
  And Mercy crowns all!

Then doubt not, ye fearful—
  The Eternal is King—
Up, heart, and be cheerful,
  And lustily sing:—
What chariots, what horses
  Against us shall bide
While the Stars in their courses
  Do fight on our side?

RECESSIONAL

God of our fathers, known of old,
  Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
  Dominion over palm and pine—

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;
  The captains and the kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
  An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away;
  On dune and headland sinks the fire:
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
  Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
  Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
  Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
  In reeking tube and iron shard,
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
  And, guarding, calls not Thee to guard,
For frantic boast and foolish word—
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!

Richard Le Gallienne, who, in spite of his long residence in the United States, must be considered an English poet, was born at Liverpool in 1866. He entered on a business career soon after leaving Liverpool College, but, after five or six years, gave up commercial life to become a man of letters.

His early work was strongly influenced by the artificialities of the æsthetic movement (see Preface); the indebtedness to Oscar Wilde is especially evident. A little later, Keats was the dominant influence, and *English Poems* (1892) betray how deep were Le Gallienne's admirations. His more recent poems in *The Lonely Dancer* (1913) show a keener individuality and a finer lyrical passion. His prose fancies are well known—particularly *The Book Bills of Narcissus* and the charming and high-spirited fantasia, *The Quest of the Golden Girl. The Junkman and other Poems* appeared in 1921.

Le Gallienne came to America about 1905 and has lived ever since in Rowayton, Conn., and New York City.

A BALLAD OF LONDON

Ah, London! London! our delight,
Great flower that opens but at night,
Great City of the midnight sun,
Whose day begins when day is done.

Lamp after lamp against the sky
Opens a sudden beaming eye,
Leaping alight on either hand,
The iron lilies of the Strand.

Like dragonflies, the hansoms hover,
With jeweled eyes, to catch the lover;
The streets are full of lights and loves,
Soft gowns, and flutter of soiled doves.

The human moths about the light
Dash and cling close in dazed delight,
And burn and laugh, the world and wife,
For this is London, this is life!

Upon thy petals butterflies,
But at thy root, some say, there lies
A world of weeping trodden things,
Poor worms that have not eyes or wings.

From out corruption of their woe
Springs this bright flower that charms us so,
Men die and rot deep out of sight
To keep this jungle-flower bright.

Paris and London, World-Flowers twain
Wherewith the World-Tree blooms again,
Since Time hath gathered Babylon,
And withered Rome still withers on.

Sidon and Tyre were such as ye,
How bright they shone upon the tree!
But Time hath gathered, both are gone,
And no man sails to Babylon.

REGRET

One asked of regret,
  And I made reply:
To have held the bird,
  And let it fly;
To have seen the star
  For a moment nigh,

And lost it
  Through a slothful eye;
To have plucked the flower
  And cast it by;
To have one only hope—
  To die.

Ernest Dowson

Ernest Dowson was born at Belmont Hill in Kent, August 2, 1867. His great-uncle was Alfred Domett (Browning's "Waring"), who was at one time Prime Minister of New Zealand. Dowson, practically an invalid all his life, lived intermittently in London, Paris, Normandy and on the Riviera. He was reckless with himself and, as disease weakened him more and more, hid in miserable surroundings; for almost two years he lived in sordid supper-houses known as "cabmen's shelters." He literally drank himself to death.

His delicate and fantastic poetry was an attempt to escape from a reality too brutal for him. He, himself, was his own pitiful "Pierrot of the Minute," throwing "roses, riotously with the throng"—even though the throng ignored him. His passionate lyric, "I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion," a triumph of despair and disillusion, is an outburst in which Dowson epitomized himself. "One of the greatest lyrical poems of our time," writes Arthur Symons; "in it he has for once said everything, and he has said it to an intoxicating and perhaps immortal music."

Yet, in spite of the fact that this familiar poem has been quoted in almost every current collection, several of Dowson's less well-known poems strike a higher and far more resonant note. Among such poems is "Extreme Unction," possibly the finest expression of his Catholicism.

Dowson died obscure in 1900, one of the least effectual but one of the most gifted of modern minor poets. His life was the tragedy of a weak nature buffeted by a strong and merciless environment.

TO ONE IN BEDLAM

With delicate, mad hands, behind his sordid bars,
Surely he hath his posies, which they tear and twine;
Those scentless wisps of straw that, miserable, line
His strait, caged universe, whereat the dull world stares.

Pedant and pitiful. O, how his rapt gaze wars
With their stupidity! Know they what dreams divine
Lift his long, laughing reveries like enchanted wine,
And make his melancholy germane to the stars?

O lamentable brother! if those pity thee,
Am I not fain of all thy lone eyes promise me;
Half a fool's kingdom, far from men who sow and reap,
All their days, vanity? Better than mortal flowers,
Thy moon-kissed roses seem: better than love or sleep,
The star-crowned solitude of thine oblivious hours!

EXTREME UNCTION

Upon the eyes, the lips, the feet,
  On all the passages of sense,
The atoning oil is spread with sweet
  Renewal of lost innocence.

The feet, that lately ran so fast
  To meet desire, are soothly sealed;
The eyes that were so often cast
  On vanity, are touched and healed.

From troublous sights and sounds set free;
In such a twilight hour of breath
Shall one retrace his life, or see
Through shadows the true face of death?

Vials of mercy! Sacring oils!
I know not where nor when I come,
Nor through what wanderings and toils,
To crave of you Viaticum.

Yet, when the walls of flesh grow weak,
In such an hour, it well may be,
Through mist and darkness, light will break,
And each anointed sense will see!

"YOU WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD ME"

You would have understood me had you waited;
I could have loved you, dear! as well as he:
Had we not been impatient, dear! and fated
Always to disagree.

What is the use of speech? Silence were fitter:
Lest we should still be wishing things unsaid.
Though all the words we ever spake were bitter,
Shall I reproach you, dead?

Nay, let this earth, your portion, likewise cover
All the old anger, setting us apart:
Always, in all, in truth was I your lover;
Always, I held your heart.

I have met other women who were tender,
As you were cold, dear! with a grace as rare.
Think you, I turned to them, or made surrender,
I who had found you fair?

Had we been patient, dear! ah, had you waited,
I had fought death for you, better than he:
But from the very first, dear! we were fated
Always to disagree.

Late, late, I come to you, now death discloses
Love that in life was not to be our part:
On your low lying mound between the roses,
Sadly I cast my heart.

I would not waken you: nay! this is fitter;
Death and the darkness give you unto me;
Here we who loved so, were so cold and bitter,
Hardly can disagree.

ENVOY

(*Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat incohare longam*)

They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,
Love and desire and hate;
I think they have no portion in us after
We pass the gate.

They are not long, the days of wine and roses:
Out of a misty dream
Our path emerges for a while, then closes
Within a dream.

Born in 1867, at Broadstairs in Kent, Lionel (Pigot) Johnson received a classical education at Oxford, and his poetry is a faithful reflection of his studies in Greek and Latin literatures. Though he allied himself with the modern Irish poets, his Celtic origin is a literary myth; Johnson, having been converted to Catholicism in 1891, became imbued with Catholic and, later, with Irish traditions.

Before any of his poetry was collected in a volume, he published a book on *The Art of Thomas Hardy* (1894) which, though written before the appearance of *Jude the Obscure* or *The Dynasts,* remains the most sensitive and stimulating study of Hardy ever written. His verse, published originally among the bizarre novelties of *The Yellow Book,* was curiously cool and removed; he seemed, as one of his associates has said, a young monk surrounded by dancing pagans. "Divine austerity" is the goal to which his verse aspires. While sometimes over-decorated, it is chastely designed, and, like that of the Cavalier poets of the seventeenth century, mystically devotional.

Poems (1895) and *Ireland* (1897) were published during his lifetime; a posthumous collection of essays, *Post Liminium,* appeared in 1911. A collected edition of his poems was brought out in 1915. Johnson died tragically in 1902.

MYSTIC AND CAVALIER

Go from me: I am one of those who fall.
What! hath no cold wind swept your heart at all,
In my sad company? Before the end,
Go from me, dear my friend!

Yours are the victories of light: your feet
Rest from good toil, where rest is brave and sweet:
But after warfare in a mourning gloom,
I rest in clouds of doom.

Have you not read so, looking in these eyes?
Is it the common light of the pure skies
Lights up their shadowy depths? The end is set:
Though the end be not yet.

When gracious music stirs, and all is bright,
And beauty triumphs through a courtly night;
When I too joy, a man like other men:
Yet, am I like them, then?

And in the battle, when the horsemen sweep
Against a thousand deaths, and fall on sleep:
Who ever sought that sudden calm, if I
Sought not? yet could not die!

Seek with thine eyes to pierce this crystal sphere:
Canst read a fate there, prosperous and clear?
Only the mists, only the weeping clouds,
Dimness and airy shrouds.

Beneath, what angels are at work? What powers
Prepare the secret of the fatal hours?
See! the mists tremble, and the clouds are stirred:
When comes the calling word?

The clouds are breaking from the crystal ball,
Breaking and clearing: and I look to fall.
When the cold winds and airs of portent sweep,
My spirit may have sleep.

O rich and sounding voices of the air!
Interpreters and prophets of despair:
Priests of a fearful sacrament! I come
To make with you mine home.

TO A TRAVELLER

The mountains, and the lonely death at last
Upon the lonely mountains: O strong friend!
The wandering over, and the labour passed,
Thou art indeed at rest:
Earth gave thee of her best,
That labour and this end.

Earth was thy mother, and her true son thou:
Earth called thee to a knowledge of her ways,
Upon the great hills, up the great streams: now:
Upon earth's kindly breast
Thou art indeed at rest:
Thou, and thine arduous days.

Fare thee well, O strong heart! The tranquil night
Looks calmly on thee: and the sun pours down
His glory over thee, O heart of might!
Earth gives thee perfect rest:
Earth, whom thy swift feet pressed:
Earth, whom the vast stars crown.

THE PRECEPT OF SILENCE

I know you: solitary griefs,
Desolate passions, aching hours!
I know you: tremulous beliefs,
Agonised hopes, and ashen flowers!

The winds are sometimes sad to me;
The starry spaces, full of fear:
Mine is the sorrow on the sea,
And mine the sigh of places drear.

Some players upon plaintive strings
Publish their wistfulness abroad:
I have not spoken of these things,
Save to one man, and unto God.

"A. E."
(*George William Russell*)

George William Russell was born at Lurgan, a tiny town in the north of Ireland, in 1867. He moved to Dublin when he was 10 years old and, after studying at the School of Art, he became an Accountant and helped to organize co-operative societies. Meeting W. B. Yeats, he helped to form the group that gave rise to the Irish Renascence—the group of which Doctor Douglas Hyde, Katharine Tynan and Lady Gregory were brilliant members. Besides being a splendid mystical poet, "A. E." is a painter of note, a fiery patriot, a distinguished sociologist, a public speaker, a student of economics and one of the heads of the Irish Agricultural Association.

The best of his radiant poetry is in *Homeward Songs by the Way* (1894) and *The Earth Breath and Other Poems* (1897). Yeats has spoken of these poems as "revealing in all things a kind of scented flame consuming them from within." *Collected Poems,* including "A. E." 's recent work, appeared in 1914.

THE GREAT BREATH

Its edges foamed with amethyst and rose,
Withers once more the old blue flower of day:
There where the ether like a diamond glows,
Its petals fade away.

A shadowy tumult stirs the dusky air;
Sparkle the delicate dews, the distant snows;
The great deep thrills—for through it everywhere
The breath of Beauty blows.

I saw how all the trembling ages past,
Moulded to her by deep and deeper breath,
Near'd to the hour when Beauty breathes her last
And knows herself in death.

FROLIC

The children were shouting together
And racing along the sands,
A glimmer of dancing shadows,
A dovelike flutter of hands.

The stars were shouting in heaven,
The sun was chasing the moon:
The game was the same as the children's,
They danced to the self-same tune.

The whole of the world was merry,
One joy from the vale to the height,
Where the blue woods of twilight encircled
The love-lawns of the light.

THE UNKNOWN GOD

Far up the dim twilight fluttered
  Moth-wings of vapour and flame:
The lights danced over the mountains,
  Star after star they came.

The lights grew thicker unheeded,
For silent and still were we;
Our hearts were drunk with a beauty
Our eyes could never see.

Stephen Phillips

Born in 1868, Stephen Phillips is best known as the author of *Herod* (1900), *Paola and Francesca* (1899), and *Ulysses* (1902); a poetic playwright who succeeded in reviving, for a brief interval, the blank verse drama on the modern stage. Hailed at first with extravagant and almost incredible praise, Phillips lived to see his most popular dramas discarded and his new ones, such as *Pietro of Siena* (1910), unproduced and unnoticed.

Phillips failed to "restore" poetic drama because he was, first of all, a lyric rather than a dramatic poet. In spite of certain moments of rhetorical splendor, his scenes are spectacular instead of emotional; his inspiration is too often derived from other models.

As a poet, his reputation has shrunk almost as much as his popularity as a dramatist. Yet, in spite of a too ornate, artificial diction, parts of *Marpessa* (1900) and *Lyrics and Dramas* (1913) achieve a ringing if traditional eloquence.

Phillips died in 1915.

BEAUTIFUL LIE THE DEAD

Beautiful lie the dead;
Clear comes each feature;
Satisfied not to be,
Strangely contented.

Like ships, the anchor dropped,
Furled every sail is;
Mirrored with all their masts
In a deep water.

A DREAM

My dear love came to me, and said:
'God gives me one hour's rest
To spend with thee on earth again:
How shall we spend it best?'

'Why, as of old,' I said; and so
We quarrelled, as of old:
But, when I turned to make my peace,
That one short hour was told.

Laurence Binyon

(Robert) Laurence Binyon was born at Lancaster, August 10, 1869, a cousin of Stephen Phillips, and was educated at Trinity College, Oxford. He won the Newdigate Prize in 1890, and, joined by Phillips, poems by both cousins appeared together the same year in *Primavera*. Binyon's subsequent volumes showed little distinction until he published *London Visions,* which, in an enlarged edition in 1908, revealed a gift of characterization and a turn of speech in surprising contrast to his previous academic *Lyrical Poems* (1894). His *Odes* (1901) contains his ripest work; two poems in particular, "The Threshold" and "The Bacchanal of Alexander," are glowing and unusually spontaneous.

Binyon's power has continued to grow; age has given his verse a new sharpness. (Since 1893, he has been in charge of the Oriental Prints and Drawings in the British Museum.) His most recent work, *The Secret,* appeared in 1920. Two years later, The Macmillan Company published a *Selected Poems.*

A SONG

For Mercy, Courage, Kindness, Mirth,
There is no measure upon earth.
Nay, they wither, root and stem,
If an end be set to them.

Overbrim and overflow,
If your own heart you would know;
For the spirit born to bless
Lives but in its own excess.

THE HOUSE THAT WAS

Of the old house, only a few crumbled
  Courses of brick, smothered in nettle and dock,
Or a squared stone, lying mossy where it tumbled!
  Sprawling bramble and saucy thistle mock
What once was firelit floor and private charm
  Whence, seen in a windowed picture, were hills fading
At dusk, and all was memory-coloured and warm,
  And voices talked, secure from the wind's invading.

Of the old garden, only a stray shining
  Of daffodil flames amid April's cuckoo-flowers,
Or a cluster of aconite mixt with weeds entwining!
  But, dark and lofty, a royal cedar towers
By homely thorns; and whether the white rain drifts
  Or sun scorches, he holds the downs in ken,
The western vales; his branchy tiers he lifts,
  Older than many a generation of men.

Lord Alfred Douglas was born in 1870 and educated at Magdalen College, Oxford. He was the editor of *The Academy* from 1907 to 1910 and was at one time the intimate friend of Oscar Wilde. One of the minor poets of "the eighteen-nineties," several of his poems rise above his own affectations and the end-of-the-century decadence. *The City of the Soul* (1899) and *Sonnets* (1900) contain his most graceful writing, the latter volume disclosing Douglas's gift of phrase-making.

The "Sonnet on the Sonnet" (which might, with more accuracy, have been entitled "Sonnet on the Writing of Sonnets") illustrates Douglas's individuality as well as his characteristic technique.

THE GREEN RIVER

I know a green grass path that leaves the field
And, like a running river, winds along
Into a leafy wood, where is no throng
Of birds at noon-day; and no soft throats yield
Their music to the moon. The place is sealed,
An unclaimed sovereignty of voiceless song,
And all the unravished silences belong
To some sweet singer lost or unrevealed.

So is my soul become a silent place. . . .
Oh, may I wake from this uneasy night
To find some voice of music manifold.
Let it be shape of sorrow with wan face,
Or love that swoons on sleep, or else delight
That is as wide-eyed as a marigold.

SONNET ON THE SONNET

To see the moment hold a madrigal,
To find some cloistered place, some hermitage
For free devices, some deliberate cage
Wherein to keep wild thoughts like birds in thrall,
To eat sweet honey and to taste black gall,
To fight with form, to wrestle and to rage,
Till at the last upon the conquered page
The shadows of created Beauty fall—

This is the sonnet, this is all delight
Of every flower that blows in every Spring,
And all desire of every desert place,
This is the joy that fills a cloudy night
When, bursting from her misty following,
A perfect moon wins to an empty space.

T. Sturge Moore

Thomas Sturge Moore was born at Hastings March 4, 1870. He is well known not only as an author, but as a critic, wood-engraver, and designer of book-plates. As an artist, he has achieved no little distinction and has designed the covers for the poetry of W. B. Yeats and others. As a poet, the greater portion of his verse is severely classical in tone, academic in expression but, of its kind, distinctive and intimate. Among his many volumes, the most outstanding are *The Vinedresser and Other Poems* (1899), *A Sicilian Idyll* (1911) and *The Sea Is Kind* (1914).

As critic, Sturge Moore has written works on Correggio, Dürer, Blake and other artists, his prose being as definitely balanced as his verse.

THE DYING SWAN

O silver-throated Swan,
Struck, struck! A golden dart
Clean through thy breast has gone
Home to thy heart.
Thrill, thrill, O silver throat!
O silver trumpet, pour
Love for defiance back
On him who smote!
And brim, brim o'er
With love; and ruby-dye thy track
Down thy last living reach
Of river, sail the golden light—
Enter the sun's heart—even teach,
O wondrous-gifted Pain, teach Thou
The God of love, let him learn how!

SILENCE SINGS

So faint, no ear is sure it hears,
So faint and far;
So vast that very near appears
My voice, both here and in each star
Unmeasured leagues do bridge between;
Like that which on a face is seen
Where secrets are;
Sweeping, like veils of lofty balm,
Tresses unbound
O'er desert sand, o'er ocean calm,
I am wherever is not sound;
And, goddess of the truthful face,
My beauty doth instil its grace
That joy abound.

(Joseph) Hilaire (Pierre) Belloc, who has been described as "a Frenchman, an Englishman, an Oxford man, a country gentleman, a soldier, a satirist, a democrat, a novelist, and a practical journalist," was born July 27, 1870. After leaving school he served as a driver in the 8th Regiment of French Artillery at Toul Meurthe-et-Moselle, being at that time a French citizen. He was naturalized as a British subject somewhat later, finished his education at Balliol College, Oxford, and in 1906 entered the House of Commons as Liberal Member for South Salford.

As an author, he has engaged in multiple activities. He has written three satirical novels, one of which, *Mr. Clutterbuck's Election,* sharply exposes British newspapers and underground politics. His *Path to Rome* (1902) is a high-spirited and ever-delightful travel book which has passed through many editions. His historical studies and biographies of *Robespierre* and *Marie Antoinette* (1909) are classics of their kind. His nonsense-rhymes (*Cautionary Tales, More Beasts for Worse Children*) are comparable to Edward Lear's. As a serious poet, he is somewhat less engaging. His *Verses* (1910) is a rather brief collection of poems on a wide variety of themes. Although his humorous and burlesque stanzas are refreshing, Belloc is most himself when he writes either of malt liquor or his beloved Sussex. Though his religious poems are full of a fine romanticism, "The South Country" is the most pictorial and persuasive of his earnest poems. His poetic as well as his spiritual kinship with G. K. Chesterton is obvious.

As an agile maker of epigrams, he has few equals, a fact proved by the inclusion of most of his rhymed *bon mots* in Belloc's *Collected Poems* in 1923.

THE SOUTH COUNTRY

When I am living in the Midlands
  That are sodden and unkind,
I light my lamp in the evening:
  My work is left behind;
And the great hills of the South Country
  Come back into my mind.

The great hills of the South Country
They stand along the sea;
And it's there walking in the high woods
That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Walking along with me.

The men that live in North England
I saw them for a day:
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
Their skies are fast and grey;
From their castle-walls a man may see
The mountains far away.

The men that live in West England
They see the Severn strong,
A-rolling on rough water brown
Light aspen leaves along.
They have the secret of the Rocks,
And the oldest kind of song.

But the men that live in the South Country
Are the kindest and most wise,
They get their laughter from the loud surf,
And the faith in their happy eyes
Comes surely from our Sister the Spring
When over the sea she flies;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet,
She blesses us with surprise.

I never get between the pines
But I smell the Sussex air;
Nor I never come on a belt of sand
But my home is there.
And along the sky the line of the Downs
So noble and so bare.

A lost thing could I never find,
  Nor a broken thing mend:
And I fear I shall be all alone
  When I get towards the end.
Who will there be to comfort me
  Or who will be my friend?

I will gather and carefully make my friends
  Of the men of the Sussex Weald;
They watch the stars from silent folds,
  They stiffly plough the field.
By them and the God of the South Country
  My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
  Or if ever I grow to be old,
I will build a house with deep thatch
  To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
  And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood
  Within a walk of the sea,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
  Shall sit and drink with me.

HA'NACKER MILL

Sally is gone that was so kindly,
  Sally is gone from Ha'nacker Hill.
And the Briar grows ever since then so blindly
  And ever since then the clapper is still,
  And the sweeps have fallen from Ha'nacker Mill.

Ha'nacker Hill is in Desolation:
  Ruin a-top and a field unploughed,
And Spirits that call on a fallen nation,
  Spirits that loved her calling aloud:
  Spirits abroad in a windy cloud.

Spirits that call and no one answers;
  Ha'nacker's down and England's done.
Wind and Thistle for pipe and dancers
  And never a ploughman under the Sun.
  Never a ploughman. Never a one.

THREE EPIGRAMS

On His Books

When I am dead, I hope it may be said:
"His sins were scarlet, but his books were read."

Epitaph on the Politician

Here, richly, with ridiculous display,
The Politician's corpse was laid away.
While all of his acquaintance sneered and slanged,
I wept: for I had longed to see him hanged.

For False Heart

I said to Heart, "How goes it?" Heart replied:
"Right as a Ribstone Pippin!" But it lied.

Anthony C. Deane was born in 1870 and was the Seatonian prizeman in 1905 at Clare College, Cambridge. He has been Vicar of All Saints, Ennismore Gardens, since 1916. His long list of light verse and essays includes several excellent parodies, the most delightful being found in his *New Rhymes for Old* (1901).

THE BALLAD OF THE *BILLYCOCK*

It was the good ship *Billycock,* with thirteen men aboard,
Athirst to grapple with their country's foes,—
A crew, 'twill be admitted, not numerically fitted
To navigate a battleship in prose.

It was the good ship *Billycock* put out from Plymouth Sound,
While lustily the gallant heroes cheered,
And all the air was ringing with the merry bo'sun's singing,
Till in the gloom of night she disappeared.

But when the morning broke on her, behold, a dozen ships,
A dozen ships of France around her lay,
(Or, if that isn't plenty, I will gladly make it twenty),
And hemmed her close in Salamander Bay.

Then to the Lord High Admiral there spake a cabin-boy:
"Methinks," he said, "the odds are somewhat great,
And, in the present crisis, a cabin-boy's advice is
That you and France had better arbitrate!"

"Pooh!" said the Lord High Admiral, and slapped his manly chest,
"Pooh! That would be both cowardly and wrong;
Shall I, a gallant fighter, give the needy ballad-writer
No suitable material for song?"

"Nay—is the shorthand-writer here?—I tell you, one and all,
I mean to do my duty, as I ought;
With eager satisfaction let us clear the decks for action
And fight the craven Frenchmen!" So they fought.

And (after several stanzas which as yet are incomplete,
Describing all the fight in epic style)
When the *Billycock* was going, she'd a dozen prizes towing
(Or twenty, as above) in single file!

Ah, long in glowing English hearts the story will remain,
The memory of that historic day,
And, while we rule the ocean, we will picture with emotion
The *Billycock* in Salamander Bay!

P.S.—I've lately noticed that the critics—who, I think,
In praising *my* productions are remiss—
Quite easily are captured, and profess themselves enraptured,
By patriotic ditties such as this,

For making which you merely take some dauntless Englishmen,
Guns, heroism, slaughter, and a fleet—
Ingredients you mingle in a metre with a jingle,
And there you have your masterpiece complete!

Why, then, with labour infinite, produce a book of verse
To languish on the "All for Twopence" shelf?
The ballad bold and breezy comes particularly easy—
I mean to take to writing it myself!

William H. Davies

According to his own biography, William Henry Davies was born in a public-house called Church House at Newport, in the County of Monmouthshire, April 20, 1870, of Welsh parents. He was, until Bernard Shaw "discovered" him, a cattleman, a berry-picker, a panhandler—in short, a vagabond. In a preface to Davies' second book, *The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp* (1906), Shaw describes how the manuscript came into his hands:

"In the year 1905 I received by post a volume of poems by one William H. Davies, whose address was The Farm House, Kennington, S. E. I was surprised to learn that there was still a farmhouse left in Kennington; for I did not then suspect that The Farm House, like the Shepherdess Walks and Nightingale Lane and Whetstone Parks of Bethnal Green and Holborn, is so called nowadays in irony, and is, in fact, a doss-house, or hostelry, where single men can have a night's lodging, for, at most, sixpence. . . . The author, as far as I could guess, had walked into a printer's or stationer's shop; handed in his manuscript; and ordered his book as he might have ordered a pair of boots. It was marked 'price, half a crown.' An accompanying letter asked me very civilly if I required a half-crown book of verses; and if so, would I please send the author the half-crown: if not, would I return the book. This was attractively simple and sensible. I opened the book, and was more puzzled than ever; for before I had read three lines I perceived that the author was a real poet. His work was not in the least strenuous or modern; there was indeed no sign of his ever having read anything otherwise than as a child reads. . . . Here, I saw, was a genuine innocent, writing odds and ends of verse about odds and ends of things; living quite out of the world in which such things are usually done, and knowing no

better (or rather no worse) than to get his book made by the appropriate craftsman and hawk it round like any other ware."

It is more than likely that Davies' first notoriety as a tramp-poet who had ridden the rails in the United States and had had his right foot cut off by a train in Canada, obscured his merits as a genuine singer. Even his early *The Soul's Destroyer* (1907) revealed that simplicity which is as *naïf* as it is strange. The volumes that followed are more clearly melodious, more like the visionary wonder of Blake. Theirs is that artlessness, so difficult of achievement by the sophisticated mind, which has made Davies the leader of the group of post-war bucolic poets. (See Preface.) Untouched by current thought or fashions in verse, Davies writes of cows and lambs, of winds and trees, familiar birds and beasts, with an air of childlike surprise; he rhymes these things as though no one had ever sung of them before.

Technically, his work is not in the least remarkable; it is the extraordinary freshness of his vision, his unspoiled, bright-eyed enthusiasm, which distinguishes him as one of the greatest pastoral poets of his country. And, in his later work, Davies perceives presences unseen by the physical eye; in *Secrets* (1924) and *The Hour of Magic* (1923), his paganism has a deeper note, even his repetitions (and Davies is too prolific a writer to be self-critical) have a sharper accent. His is a robin-like note produced by a bird-like mind.

Davies has published twelve volumes of original poetry since his first offering in 1906. Most of the poems contained in these books have been assembled—with the exception of the most recent work mentioned above—in *Collected Poems: First Series* (1916) and *Collected Poems: Second Series* (1923). In 1925, Harcourt, Brace and Company published *Selected Poems* with decorations.

DAYS TOO SHORT

When primroses are out in Spring,
  And small, blue violets come between;
  When merry birds sing on boughs green,
And rills, as soon as born, must sing;

When butterflies will make side-leaps,
  As though escaped from Nature's hand
  Ere perfect quite; and bees will stand
Upon their heads in fragrant deeps;

When small clouds are so silvery white
  Each seems a broken rimmèd moon—
  When such things are, this world too soon,
For me, doth wear the veil of Night.

THE MOON

Thy beauty haunts me heart and soul,
  O thou fair Moon, so close and bright;
Thy beauty makes me like the child
  That cries aloud to own thy light:
The little child that lifts each arm
To press thee to her bosom warm.

Though there are birds that sing this night
  With thy white beams across their throats,
Let my deep silence speak for me
  More than for them their sweetest notes:
Who worships thee till music fails
Is greater than thy nightingales.

THE VILLAIN

While joy gave clouds the light of stars,
  That beamed where'er they looked;
And calves and lambs had tottering knees,
  Excited, while they sucked;

While every bird enjoyed his song,
Without one thought of harm or wrong—
I turned my head and saw the wind,
  Not far from where I stood,
Dragging the corn by her golden hair,
  Into a dark and lonely wood.

THE EXAMPLE

Here's an example from
  A Butterfly;
That on a rough, hard rock
  Happy can lie;
Friendless and all alone
On this unsweetened stone.

Now let my bed be hard,
  No care take I;
I'll make my joy like this
  Small Butterfly,
Whose happy heart has power
To make a stone a flower.

THE TWO STARS

Day has her star, as well as Night,
One star is black, the other white.
I saw a white star burn and pant
  And swirl with such a wildness, once—
That I stood still, and almost stared
  Myself into a trance!

The star of Day, both seen and heard,
Is but a little, English bird:
The Lark, whose wings beat time to his
  Wild rapture, sings, high overhead;
When silence comes, we almost fear
  That Earth receives its dead.

TO A LADY FRIEND

Since you have turned unkind,
  Then let the truth be known:
We poets give our praise
  To any weed or stone,
Or sulking bird that in
  The cold, sharp wind is dumb;
To this, or that, or you—
  Whatever's first to come.

You came my way the first,
  When the life-force in my blood—
Coming from none knows where—
  Had reached its highest flood:
A time when anything,
  No matter old or new,
Could bring my song to birth—
  Sticks, bones, or rags, or you!

LEAVES

Peace to these little broken leaves,
  That strew our common ground:
That chase their tails, like silly dogs,
  As they go round and round.

For though in winter boughs are bare,
  Let us not once forget
Their summer glory, when these leaves
  Caught the great Sun in their strong net;
And made him, in the lower air,
Tremble—no bigger than a star!

LEISURE

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

John M. Synge, the most brillant star of the Celtic revival, was born at Rathfarnham, near Dublin, in 1871, his maternal grandfather, Robert Traill, being famous for a splendid translation of Josephus. As a child in Wicklow, Synge was already fascinated by the strange idioms and the rhythmic speech he heard there, a native utterance which was his greatest delight and which was to be rich material for his greatest work. He did not use this folk-language merely as he heard it. He was an artist first, and, as an artist, he bent and shaped the rough material, selecting with great fastidiousness, so that in his plays every speech is, as he himself declared all good speech should be, "as fully flavored as a nut or apple." Even in *The Tinker's Wedding* (1907), the least important of his plays, Synge's peculiarly inflected sentences vivify every scene; one is arrested by snatches of illuminated prose like:

> "That's a sweet tongue you have, Sarah Casey; but if sleep's a grand thing, it's a grand thing to be waking up a day the like of this, when there's a warm sun in it, and a kind air, and you'll hear the cuckoos singing and crying out on the top of the hill."

For some time, Synge's career was uncertain. He went to Germany half intending to become a professional musician. There he studied the theory of music, perfecting himself meanwhile in Gaelic and Hebrew, winning prizes in both of these languages. He took up Heine with great interest, familiarized himself with the peasant-dramas of Anzengruber, and was planning to translate the ballads of the old German minnesingers into Anglo-Irish dialect. Then he went to Paris.

Yeats found him in France in 1898 and advised him to go to the Aran Islands, to live there as if he were one of the people. "Express a life," said Yeats, "that has never found expression." Synge went. He became part of the life of Aran, living upon salt fish and eggs, talking Irish for the most part, but listening also to that beautiful English which, to quote Yeats again, "has grown up in Irish-speaking districts and takes its vocabulary from the time of Malory and of the translators of the Bible, but its idiom and vivid metaphor from Irish." The result of this close contact was five of the greatest poetic

prose dramas not only of Synge's own generation, but of several generations preceding it. (See Preface.)

In *Riders to the Sea* (1903), *The Well of the Saints* (1905), and *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907), we have a richness of imagery, a new language startling in its vigor; a wildness and passion that contrast strangely with the suave mysticism and delicate spirituality of the playwright's associates in the Irish Theatre.

Synge's *Poems and Translations* (1910), a volume which was not issued until after his death, contains not only his few hard and earthy verses, but also Synge's theory of poetry. The translations, which have been rendered in a highly intensified prose, are as racy as anything in his plays; his versions of Villon and Petrarch are remarkable for their adherence to the original though they radiate the adapter's own personality.

Synge died, just as he was beginning to attain fame, at a private hospital in Dublin March 24, 1909.

PRELUDE

Still south I went and west and south again,
Through Wicklow from the morning till the night,
And far from cities and the sights of men,
Lived with the sunshine and the moon's delight.

I knew the stars, the flowers, and the birds,
The grey and wintry sides of many glens,
And did but half remember human words,
In converse with the mountains, moors and fens.

BEG-INNISH

Bring Kateen-beug and Maurya Jude
To dance in Beg-Innish,[1]

[1] (The accent is on the last syllable.)

And when the lads (they're in Dunquin)
Have sold their crabs and fish,
Wave fawny shawls and call them in,
And call the little girls who spin,
And seven weavers from Dunquin,
To dance in Beg-Innish.

I'll play you jigs, and Maurice Kean,
Where nets are laid to dry,
I've silken strings would draw a dance
From girls are lame or shy;
Four strings I've brought from Spain and
France
To make your long men skip and prance,
Till stars look out to see the dance
Where nets are laid to dry.

We'll have no priest or peeler in
To dance in Beg-Innish;
But we'll have drink from M'riarty Jim
Rowed round while gannets fish,
A keg with porter to the brim,
That every lad may have his whim,
Till we up sails with M'riarty Jim
And sail from Beg-Innish.

IN KERRY

We heard the thrushes by the shore and sea,
And saw the golden stars' nativity,
Then round we went the lane by Thomas Flynn,
Across the church where bones lie out and in;
And there I asked beneath a lonely cloud
Of strange delight, with one bird singing loud,

What change you'd wrought in graveyard, rock and sea,
To wake this new wild paradise for me. . . .
Yet knew no more than knew those merry sins
Had built this stack of thigh-bones, jaws and shins.

A TRANSLATION FROM PETRARCH

(*He is Jealous of the Heavens and the Earth*)

What a grudge I am bearing the earth that has its arms about her, and is holding that face away from me, where I was finding peace from great sadness.

What a grudge I am bearing the Heavens that are after taking her, and shutting her in with greediness, the Heavens that do push their bolt against so many.

What a grudge I am bearing the blessed saints that have got her sweet company, that I am always seeking; and what a grudge I am bearing against Death, that is standing in her two eyes, and will not call me with a word.

TO THE OAKS OF GLENCREE

My arms are round you, and I lean
Against you, while the lark
Sings over us, and golden lights and green
Shadows are on your bark.

There'll come a season when you'll stretch
Black boards to cover me;
Then in Mount Jerome I will lie, poor wretch,
With worms eternally.

Nora Hopper was born in Exeter on January 2, 1871, and married W. H. Chesson, a well-known writer, in 1901. Although the Irish element in her work is acquired and incidental, there is a distinct if somewhat fitful race consciousness in *Ballads in Prose* (1894) and *Under Quickened Boughs* (1896). She died suddenly April 14, 1906.

A CONNAUGHT LAMENT

I will arise and go hence to the west,
And dig me a grave where the hill-winds call;
But O were I dead, were I dust, the fall
Of my own love's footstep would break my rest!

My heart in my bosom is black as a sloe!
I heed not cuckoo, nor wren, nor swallow:
Like a flying leaf in the sky's blue hollow
The heart in my breast is, that beats so low.

Because of the words your lips have spoken,
(O dear black head that I must not follow)
My heart is a grave that is stripped and hollow,
As ice on the water my heart is broken.

O lips forgetful and kindness fickle,
The swallow goes south with you: I go west
Where fields are empty and scythes at rest.
I am the poppy and you the sickle;
My heart is broken within my breast.

Eva Gore-Booth, the second daughter of Sir Henry Gore-Booth and the sister of Countess Marcievicz, was born in Sligo, Ireland, in 1871. She first appeared in "A. E."'s anthology, *New Songs,* in which so many of the modern Irish poets first came forward.

Her initial volume, *Poems* (1898), showed practically no distinction—not even the customary "promise." But *The One and the Many* (1904), *The Sorrowful Princess* (1907) and the later *The Sword of Justice* (1918) reveal the gift of the Celtic singer who is half mystic, half minstrel. Primarily philosophic, her verse often turns to lyrics as haunting as the two examples here reprinted.

THE WAVES OF BREFFNY

The grand road from the mountain goes shining to the sea,
And there is traffic on it and many a horse and cart,
But the little roads of Cloonagh are dearer far to me
And the little roads of Cloonagh go rambling through my heart.

A great storm from the ocean goes shouting o'er the hill,
And there is glory in it; and terror on the wind:
But the haunted air of twilight is very strange and still,
And the little winds of twilight are dearer to my mind.

The great waves of the Atlantic sweep storming on their way,
Shining green and silver with the hidden herring shoal;
But the little waves of Breffny have drenched my heart in spray,
And the little waves of Breffny go stumbling through my soul.

WALLS

Free to all souls the hidden beauty calls,
The sea thrift dwelling on her spray-swept height,
The lofty rose, the low-grown aconite,
The gliding river and the stream that brawls
Down the sharp cliffs with constant breaks and falls—
All these are equal in the equal light—
All waters mirror the one Infinite.

God made a garden, it was men built walls;
But the wide sea from men is wholly freed;
Freely the great waves rise and storm and break,
Nor softlier go for any landlord's need,
Where rhythmic tides flow for no miser's sake
And none hath profit of the brown sea-weed,
But all things give themselves, yet none may take.

Moira O'Neill

Moira O'Neill is known chiefly by a remarkable little collection of only twenty-five lyrics, *Songs of the Glens of Antrim* (1900), simple tunes as unaffected as the peasants of whom she sings. A second volume, *More Songs of the Glens of Antrim,* was published in 1921. The best of her poetry is dramatic without being theatrical; melodious without falling into the tinkle of most "popular" sentimental verse.

A BROKEN SONG

'Where am I from?' From the green hills of Erin.
'Have I no song then?' My songs are all sung.
'What o' my love?' 'Tis alone I am farin'.
Old grows my heart, an' my voice yet is young.

'If she was tall?' Like a king's own daughter.
'If she was fair?' Like a mornin' o' May.
When she'd come laughin' 'twas the running wather,
When she'd come blushin' 'twas the break o' day.

'Where did she dwell?' Where one'st I had my dwellin'.
'Who loved her best?' There's no one now will know.
'Where is she gone?' Och, why would I be tellin'!
Where she is gone there I can never go.

BEAUTY'S A FLOWER

Youth's for an hour,
Beauty's a flower,
But love is the jewel that wins the world.

Youth's for an hour, an' the taste o' life is sweet,
Ailes was a girl that stepped on two bare feet;
In all my days I never seen the one as fair as she,
I'd have lost my life for Ailes, an' she never cared for me.

Beauty's a flower, an' the days o' life are long,
There's little knowin' who may live to sing another song;
For Ailes was the fairest, but another is my wife,
An' Mary—God be good to her!—is all I love in life.

Youth's for an hour,
Beauty's a flower,
But love is the jewel that wins the world.

Ralph Hodgson was born in Northumberland in 1871 and, with the exception of brief intervals as professional draughtsman, has devoted his life to literature. To be more exact, Hodgson has given only his highest moments to his art, believing with Housman that lyric poetry—and Hodgson is one of the greatest lyric poets of this age—is not a casual recreation. Writing little and publishing less, Hodgson was unknown until he was almost forty, his first book, *The Last Blackbird and Other Lines,* appearing in 1907. In 1913, he went into partnership with Lovat Fraser and Holbrook Jackson, publishing broadsides and chapbooks; many of his most famous poems appearing in the exquisite booklets issued by their press, "The Sign of Flying Fame." *Eve, The Bull, The Song of Honour, The Mystery and Other Poems* (1913-1914) found a wide circle of delighted readers in this format. A collected edition (entitled simply *Poems*) was published in 1917.

In 1924, Hodgson accepted an invitation to visit Japan as lecturer in English literature, and August of that year found him at Sendai University, about two hundred miles from Tokio.

One of the most graceful of word-magicians, Ralph Hodgson will retain his freshness as long as there are lovers of rare and timeless songs. It is difficult to think of any anthology of contemporary English poetry that could omit "Eve," "The Song of Honour," and that memorable snatch of music, "Time, You Old Gypsy Man." One succumbs to the charm of "Eve" at the first reading; for here is the oldest of all legends told with a surprising simplicity and still more surprising difference. This Eve is neither the conscious sinner nor the symbolic Mother of men; she is, in Hodgson's candid lines, any young, English country girl—filling her basket, regarding the world and the serpent itself with a frank and childlike wonder.

Hodgson's verses, full of the love of all natural things, a love that goes out to

"an idle rainbow
No less than laboring seas,"

were originally brought out in the much-sought yellow wrappers with Lovat Fraser's charming decorations. His collected *Poems* appeared in America in 1918. The longer verses are powerfully sustained; the short lyrics are as fresh as any poetry ever written in English.

EVE

Eve, with her basket, was
Deep in the bells and grass,
Wading in bells and grass
Up to her knees.
Picking a dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Down in the bells and grass
Under the trees.

Mute as a mouse in a
Corner the cobra lay,
Curled round a bough of the
Cinnamon tall. . . .
Now to get even and
Humble proud heaven and
Now was the moment or
Never at all.

"Eva!" Each syllable
Light as a flower fell,
"Eva!" he whispered the
Wondering maid,
Soft as a bubble sung
Out of a linnet's lung,
Soft and most silverly
"Eva!" he said.

Picture that orchard sprite;
Eve, with her body white,
Supple and smooth to her
Slim finger tips;

Wondering, listening,
Listening, wondering,
Eve with a berry
Half-way to her lips.

Oh, had our simple Eve
Seen through the make-believe!
Had she but known the
Pretender he was!
Out of the boughs he came,
Whispering still her name,
Tumbling in twenty rings
Into the grass.

Here was the strangest pair
In the world anywhere,
Eve in the bells and grass
Kneeling, and he
Telling his story low. . . .
Singing birds saw them go
Down the dark path to
The Blasphemous Tree.

Oh, what a clatter when
Titmouse and Jenny Wren
Saw him successful and
Taking his leave!
How the birds rated him,
How they all hated him!
How they all pitied
Poor motherless Eve!

Picture her crying
Outside in the lane,

Eve, with no dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Haunting the gate of the
Orchard in vain. . . .
Picture the lewd delight
Under the hill to-night—
"Eva!" the toast goes round,
"Eva!" again.

TIME, YOU OLD GIPSY MAN

Time, you old gipsy man,
  Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
  Just for one day?

All things I'll give you
Will you be my guest,
Bells for your jennet
Of silver the best,
Goldsmiths shall beat you
A great golden ring,
Peacocks shall bow to you,
Little boys sing,
Oh, and sweet girls will
Festoon you with may.
Time, you old gipsy,
Why hasten away?

Last week in Babylon,
Last night in Rome,
Morning, and in the crush
Under Paul's dome;

Under Paul's dial
You tighten your rein—
Only a moment,
And off once again;
Off to some city
Now blind in the womb,
Off to another
Ere that's in the tomb.

Time, you old gipsy man,
  Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
  Just for one day?

THE BIRDCATCHER [1]

When flighting time is on, I go
With clap-net and decoy,
A-fowling after goldfinches
And other birds of joy;

I lurk among the thickets of
The Heart where they are bred,
And catch the twittering beauties as
They fly into my Head.

THE LATE, LAST ROOK

The old gilt vane and spire receive
The last beam eastward striking;
The first shy bat to peep at eve

[1] Compare the poem on the same theme on page 354.

Has found her to his liking.
The western heaven is dull and grey,
The last red glow has followed day.

The late, last rook is housed and will
With cronies lie till morrow;
If there's a rook loquacious still
In dream he hunts a furrow,
And flaps behind a spectre team,
Or ghostly scarecrows walk his dream.

THE MYSTERY

He came and took me by the hand
  Up to a red rose tree,
He kept His meaning to Himself
  But gave a rose to me.

I did not pray Him to lay bare
  The mystery to me,
Enough the rose was Heaven to smell,
  And His own face to see.

John McCrae

John McCrae was born in Guelph, Ontario, Canada, in 1872. He was graduated in arts in 1894 and in medicine in 1898. He finished his studies at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore and returned to Canada, joining the staff of the Medical School of McGill University. He was a lieutenant of artillery in South Africa (1899-1900) and was in charge of the Medical Division of the McGill Canadian General Hospital during the World War. After serving two years, he died of pneumonia, January, 1918, his volume, *In Flanders Fields* (1919), appearing posthumously.

Few who read the title poem of his book, possibly the most widely-read poem produced by the war, realize that it is a perfect rondeau, one of the loveliest (and strictest) of the French forms.

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
  That mark our place; and in the sky
  The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
  Loved and were loved, and now we lie
    In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
  The torch; be yours to hold it high.
  If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
    In Flanders fields.

Ford Madox (Hueffer) Ford

Ford Madox Hueffer (recently he changed his name to Ford Madox Ford) was born in 1873 and is best known as the author of many novels, two of which, *Romance* and *The Inheritors*, were written in collaboration with Joseph Conrad. He has written also several critical studies, those on Rossetti and Henry James being the most notable. His *On Heaven and Other Poems* appeared in 1916.

"THERE SHALL BE MORE JOY . . ."

The little angels of Heaven
Each wear a long white dress,
And in the tall arcadings
Play ball and play at chess;

With never a soil on their garments,
Not a sigh the whole day long,
Not a bitter note in their pleasure,
Not a bitter note in their song.

But they shall know keener pleasure,
And they shall know joy more rare—
Keener, keener pleasure
When you, my dear, come there.

. . . . .

The little angels of Heaven
Each wear a long white gown,
And they lean over the ramparts
Waiting and looking down.

Walter De la Mare

The author of some of the most haunting lyrics in contemporary poetry, Walter (John) De la Mare, was born at Charlton, in Kent, in 1873. He was educated at St. Paul's School in London and was employed, for eighteen years, in the English branch of the Standard Oil Company of America.

Although he did not begin to bring out his work in book form until he was almost 30, he is, as Harold Williams has written, "the singer of a young and romantic world, a singer even for children, understanding and perceiving as a child." (His first

book, *Songs of Childhood* [1902], was published under the pseudonym "Walter Ramal.") De la Mare paints simple scenes of miniature loveliness; he uses thin-spun fragments of fairy-like delicacy and achieves a grace that is remarkable in its universality. "In a few words, seemingly artless and unsought" (to quote Williams again), "he can express a pathos or a hope as wide as man's life."

De la Mare is an astonishing joiner of words; in *Peacock Pie* (1913) he surprises us again and again by transforming what began as a child's nonsense-rhyme into a suddenly thrilling snatch of music. A score of times he takes things as casual as the feeding of chickens or the swallowing of physic, berry-picking, eating, hair-cutting—and turns them into magic. These poems read like lyrics of William Shakespeare rendered by Mother Goose. The trick of revealing the ordinary in whimsical colors, of catching the commonplace off its guard, is the first of De la Mare's two magics.

This poet's second gift is his sense of the supernatural, of the fantastic other-world that lies on the edges of our consciousness. *The Listeners* (1912) is a book that, like all the best of De la Mare, is full of half-heard whispers; moonlight and mystery seem soaked in the lines, and a cool wind from Nowhere blows over them. That most magical of modern verses, "The Listeners," and the brief music of "An Epitaph" are two fine examples among many. In the first of these poems there is an uncanny splendor. What we have here is the effect, the thrill, the overtones, of a ghost story rather than the narrative itself—the less than half-told adventure of some new Childe Roland heroically challenging a heedless universe. Never have silence and black night been reproduced more creepily, nor has the symbolism of man's courage facing the cryptic riddle of life been more memorably expressed.

De la Mare's chief distinction, however, lies not so much in what he says as in how he says it; he can even take outworn words like "thridding," "athwart," "amaranthine" and make them live again in a poetry that is of no time and of all time. He writes, it has been said, as much for antiquity as for posterity; he is a poet who is distinctively in the world and yet not wholly of it.

Collected Poems 1901-1918 was followed by *Motley* in 1919 and *The Veil* in 1921. Besides his poetry, De la Mare has

written several stories for children and half a dozen novels, of which the remarkable *Memoirs of a Midget* (1921) is a permanent addition to the world's great philosophic fiction. Recently, his earlier short stories have been republished, and, in 1923, he compiled an exhaustive collection of poems for children, an anthology entitled *Come Hither.*

THE LISTENERS

'Is there anybody there?' said the Traveller,
  Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
  Of the forest's ferny floor.
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
  Above the Traveller's head:
And he smote upon the door again a second time;
  'Is there anybody there?' he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller;
  No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
  Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
  That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
  To that voice from the world of men:
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
  That goes down to the empty hall,
Hearkening in an air stirred and shaken
  By the lonely Traveller's call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
  Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
  'Neath the starred and leafy sky;

For he suddenly smote on the door, even
  Louder, and lifted his head:—
'Tell them I came, and no one answered,
  That I kept my word,' he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
  Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
  From the one man left awake:
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
  And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
  When the plunging hoofs were gone.

AN EPITAPH

Here lies a most beautiful lady,
Light of step and heart was she;
I think she was the most beautiful lady
That ever was in the West Country.

But beauty vanishes; beauty passes;
However rare—rare it be;
And when I crumble, who will remember
This lady of the West Country?

THE TRUANTS

Ere my heart beats too coldly and faintly
  To remember sad things, yet be gay,
I would sing a brief song of the world's little
      children
  Magic hath stolen away.

The primroses scattered by April,
  The stars of the wide Milky Way,
Cannot outnumber the hosts of the children
  Magic hath stolen away.

The buttercup green of the meadows,
  The snow of the blossoming may,
Lovelier are not than the legions of children
  Magic hath stolen away.

The waves tossing surf in the moonbeam,
  The albatross lone on the spray,
Alone know the tears wept in vain for the children
  Magic hath stolen away.

In vain: for at hush of the evening,
  When the stars twinkle into the grey,
Seems to echo the far-away calling of children
  Magic hath stolen away.

OLD SUSAN

When Susan's work was done, she'd sit
With one fat guttering candle lit,
And window opened wide to win
The sweet night air to enter in;
There, with a thumb to keep her place
She'd read, with stern and wrinkled face.
Her mild eyes gliding very slow
Across the letters to and fro,
While wagged the guttering candle flame
In the wind that through the window came.

And sometimes in the silence she
Would mumble a sentence audibly,
Or shake her head as if to say,
'You silly souls, to act this way!'
And never a sound from night I'd hear,
Unless some far-off cock crowed clear;
Or her old shuffling thumb should turn
Another page; and rapt and stern,
Through her great glasses bent on me,
She'd glance into reality;
And shake her round old silvery head,
With—'You!—I thought you was in bed!'—
Only to tilt her book again,
And rooted in Romance remain.

SILVER

Slowly, silently, now the moon
Walks the night in her silver shoon;
This way, and that, she peers, and sees
Silver fruit upon silver trees;
One by one the casements catch
Her beams beneath the silvery thatch;
Couched in his kennel, like a log,
With paws of silver sleeps the dog;
From their shadowy cote the white breasts peep
Of doves in a silver-feathered sleep;
A harvest mouse goes scampering by,
With silver claws and a silver eye;
And moveless fish in the water gleam,
By silver reeds in a silver stream.

NOD

Softly along the road of evening,
In a twilight dim with rose,
Wrinkled with age, and drenched with dew
Old Nod, the shepherd, goes.

His drowsy flock streams on before him,
Their fleeces charged with gold,
To where the sun's last beam leans low
On Nod the shepherd's fold.

The hedge is quick and green with briar,
From their sand the conies creep;
And all the birds that fly in heaven
Flock singing home to sleep.

His lambs outnumber a noon's roses,
Yet, when night's shadows fall,
His blind old sheep-dog, Slumber-soon,
Misses not one of all.

His are the quiet steeps of dreamland,
The waters of no-more-pain;
His ram's bell rings 'neath an arch of stars,
"Rest, rest, and rest again."

G. K. Chesterton

That brilliant journalist, novelist, essayist, publicist and lyricist, Gilbert Keith Chesterton, was born at Campden Hill, Kensington, in 1874, and began his literary life by reviewing books on art for various magazines. He is best known as a writer of paradoxical essays on anything and everything, like

Tremendous Trifles (1909), *Varied Types* (1905), and *All Things Considered* (1910). But he is also a stimulating critic; a keen appraiser, as shown in his volume *Heretics* (1905) and his analytical studies of Robert Browning, Charles Dickens, and George Bernard Shaw; a writer of strange and grotesque romances like *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* (1906), *The Man Who Was Thursday* (1908), which Chesterton himself has subtitled "A Nightmare," and that mad extravaganza with songs for a sublimated comic-opera, *The Flying Inn* (1914). This being insufficient to exhaust his creative energy, he is also the author of several books of fantastic short stories, ranging from the whimsical narratives in *The Club of Queer Trades* (1905) to that amazing sequence *The Innocence of Father Brown* (1911) —which is a series of religious detective stories!

Besides being the creator of all of these, Chesterton finds time to be a prolific if sometimes too acrobatic newspaperman, a lay preacher in disguise (witness *Orthodoxy* [1908], *What's Wrong with the World?* [1910], *The Ball and the Cross* [1909]) and a pamphleteer. He is also—his admirers say, primarily—a poet. His first volume of verse, *The Wild Knight and Other Poems* (1900), a collection of quaintly-flavored and affirmative verses, was followed by *The Ballad of the White Horse* (1911), one long poem which, in spite of Chesterton's ever-present didactic sermonizing, is possibly the most stirring creation he has achieved. This poem has the vigor, the spontaneity, and, above all, the ageless simplicity of the true narrative ballad.

Scarcely less notable is the ringing "Lepanto" from his later, more epigrammatic *Poems* (1915) which, anticipating the clanging verses of Vachel Lindsay's "The Congo," is one of the finest of modern chants. It is interesting to see how the syllables beat, as though on brass; it is thrilling to feel how, in one's pulses, the armies sing, the feet tramp, the drums snarl, and all the tides of marching crusaders roll out of lines like:

"Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,
Don John of Austria is going to the war;
Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold
In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold;
Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,
Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon, and he comes. . . ."

Subsequent volumes have established his thoroughly English mixture of sincerity and high optimism. The rollicking *Wine, Water and Song* (1915) and *The Ballad of St. Barbara* (1922) have a humor that is "at home in the streets and familiar among the stars."

Chesterton, the prose-paradoxer, is a furiously yea-saying antagonist of a skeptical age. But it is Chesterton the poet who is more likely to outlive his period.

LEPANTO[1]

White founts falling in the Courts of the sun,
And the Soldan of Byzantium is smiling as they run;
There is laughter like the fountains in that face of all men feared,
It stirs the forest darkness, the darkness of his beard;
It curls the blood-red crescent, the crescent of his lips;
For the inmost sea of all the earth is shaken with his ships.
They have dared the white republics up the capes of Italy,
They have dashed the Adriatic round the Lion of the Sea,
And the Pope has cast his arms abroad for agony and loss,
And called the kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross.
The cold queen of England is looking in the glass;
The shadow of the Valois is yawning at the Mass;
From evening isles fantastical rings faint the Spanish gun,
And the Lord upon the Golden Horn is laughing in the sun.

Dim drums throbbing, in the hills half heard,
Where only on a nameless throne a crownless prince has stirred,

[1] From *Poems* by G. K. Chesterton. Copyright by Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc., and reprinted by permission of the publishers.

Where, risen from a doubtful seat and half-attainted stall,
The last knight of Europe takes weapons from the wall,
The last and lingering troubadour to whom the bird has sung,
That once went singing southward when all the world was young.
In that enormous silence, tiny and unafraid,
Comes up along a winding road the noise of the Crusade.
Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,
Don John of Austria is going to the war,
Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold
In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold,
Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,
Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon, and he comes.
Don John laughing in the brave beard curled,
Spurning of his stirrups like the thrones of all the world,
Holding his head up for a flag of all the free.
Love-light of Spain—hurrah!
Death-light of Africa!
Don John of Austria
Is riding to the sea.

Mahound is in his paradise above the evening star,
(*Don John of Austria is going to the war.*)
He moves a mighty turban on the timeless houri's knees,
His turban that is woven of the sunsets and the seas.
He shakes the peacock gardens as he rises from his ease,
And he strides among the tree-tops and is taller than the trees;
And his voice through all the garden is a thunder sent to bring
Black Azrael and Ariel and Ammon on the wing.

Giants and the Genii,
Multiplex of wing and eye,
Whose strong obedience broke the sky
When Solomon was king.

They rush in red and purple from the red clouds of the morn,
From the temples where the yellow gods shut up their eyes in scorn;
They rise in green robes roaring from the green hells of the sea
Where fallen skies and evil hues and eyeless creatures be,
On them the sea-valves cluster and the grey sea-forests curl,
Splashed with a splendid sickness, the sickness of the pearl;
They swell in sapphire smoke out of the blue cracks of the ground,—
They gather and they wonder and give worship to Mahound.
And he saith, "Break up the mountains where the hermit-folk can hide,
And sift the red and silver sands lest bone of saint abide,
And chase the Giaours flying night and day, not giving rest, [west.
For that which was our trouble comes again out of the
We have set the seal of Solomon on all things under sun,
Of knowledge and of sorrow and endurance of things done.
But a noise is in the mountains, in the mountains, and I know
The voice that shook our palaces—four hundred years ago:
It is he that saith not 'Kismet'; it is he that knows not Fate;
It is Richard, it is Raymond, it is Godfrey at the gate!

It is he whose loss is laughter when he counts the wager
worth,
Put down your feet upon him, that our peace be on the
earth."
For he heard drums groaning and he heard guns jar,
(*Don John of Austria is going to the war.*)
Sudden and still—hurrah!
Bolt from Iberia!
Don John of Austria
Is gone by Alcalar.

St. Michael's on his Mountain in the sea-roads of the
north
(*Don John of Austria is girt and going forth.*)
Where the grey seas glitter and the sharp tides shift
And the sea-folk labour and the red sails lift.
He shakes his lance of iron and he claps his wings of
stone;
The noise is gone through Normandy; the noise is gone
alone;
The North is full of tangled things and texts and aching
eyes,
And dead is all the innocence of anger and surprise,
And Christian killeth Christian in a narrow dusty room,
And Christian dreadeth Christ that hath a newer face of
doom,
And Christian hateth Mary that God kissed in Galilee,—
But Don John of Austria is riding to the sea.
Don John calling through the blast and the eclipse
Crying with the trumpet, with the trumpet to his lips,
Trumpet that sayeth *ha!*
Domino gloria!
Don John of Austria
Is shouting to the ships.

King Philip's in his closet with the Fleece about his neck
(*Don John of Austria is armed upon the deck.*)
The walls are hung with velvet that is black and soft as sin,
And little dwarfs creep out of it and little dwarfs creep in.
He holds a crystal phial that has colours like the moon,
He touches, and it tingles, and he trembles very soon,
And his face is as a fungus of a leprous white and grey
Like plants in the high houses that are shuttered from the day,
And death is in the phial and the end of noble work,
But Don John of Austria has fired upon the Turk.
Don John's hunting, and his hounds have bayed—
Booms away past Italy the rumour of his raid.
Gun upon gun, ha! ha!
Gun upon gun, hurrah!
Don John of Austria
Has loosed the cannonade.

The Pope was in his chapel before day or battle broke,
(*Don John of Austria is hidden in the smoke.*)
The hidden room in man's house where God sits all the year,
The secret window whence the world looks small and very dear.
He sees as in a mirror on the monstrous twilight sea
The crescent of his cruel ships whose name is mystery;
They fling great shadows foe-wards, making Cross and Castle dark,
They veil the plumèd lions on the galleys of St. Mark;
And above the ships are palaces of brown, black-bearded chiefs,
And below the ships are prisons, where with multitudinous griefs,

Christian captives, sick and sunless, all a labouring race repines
Like a race in sunken cities, like a nation in the mines.
They are lost like slaves that swat, and in the skies of morning hung
The stair-ways of the tallest gods when tyranny was young.
They are countless, voiceless, hopeless as those fallen or fleeing on
Before the high Kings' horses in the granite of Babylon.
And many a one grows witless in his quiet room in hell
Where a yellow face looks inward through the lattice of his cell,
And he finds his God forgotten, and he seeks no more a sign—
(*But Don John of Austria has burst the battle-line!*)
Don John pounding from the slaughter-painted poop,
Purpling all the ocean like a bloody pirate's sloop,
Scarlet running over on the silvers and the golds,
Breaking of the hatches up and bursting of the holds,
Thronging of the thousands up that labour under sea
White for bliss and blind for sun and stunned for liberty.
Vivat Hispania!
Domino Gloria!
Don John of Austria
Has set his people free!

Cervantes on his galley sets the sword back in the sheath
(*Don John of Austria rides homeward with a wreath.*)
And he sees across a weary land a straggling road in Spain,
Up which a lean and foolish knight for ever rides in vain,
And he smiles, but not as Sultans smile, and settles back the blade. . . .
(*But Don John of Austria rides home from the Crusade.*)

A PRAYER IN DARKNESS[1]

This much, O heaven—if I should brood or rave,
  Pity me not; but let the world be fed,
  Yea, in my madness if I strike me dead,
Heed you the grass that grows upon my grave.

If I dare snarl between this sun and sod,
  Whimper and clamour, give me grace to own,
  In sun and rain and fruit in season shown,
The shining silence of the scorn of God.

Thank God the stars are set beyond my power,
  If I must travail in a night of wrath;
  Thank God my tears will never vex a moth,
Nor any curse of mine cut down a flower.

Men say the sun was darkened: yet I had
  Thought it beat brightly, even on—Calvary:
  And He that hung upon the Torturing Tree
Heard all the crickets singing, and was glad.

ELEGY IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD[2]

The men that worked for England
They have their graves at home;
And bees and birds of England
About the cross can roam.

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[2] From *The Ballad of St. Barbara* by G. K. Chesterton. Copyright by Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc., and reprinted with their permission.

But they that fought for England,
Following a falling star,
Alas, alas, for England
They have their graves afar.

And they that rule in England
In stately conclave met,
Alas, alas, for England
They have no graves as yet.

THE DONKEY

When fishes flew and forests walked
  And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood,
  Then surely I was born;

With monstrous head and sickening cry
  And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
  On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
  Of ancient crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,
  I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;
  One far fierce hour and sweet:
There was a shout about my ears,
  And palms before my feet!

Gordon Bottomley was born in 1874 and educated at the Grammar School, Keighley. He is chiefly famous as a dramatist, his volumes—and there are ten of them dating from 1904—having elicited the highest praise upon publication. When the condensed dramas were collected in two volumes, *King Lear's Wife and Other Plays* (1920) and *Gruach and Britain's Daughter* (1921), the tributes were even more enthusiastic. Referring to *Gruach,* which is a portrait of the young Lady Macbeth at the time of her first meeting with the Thane, Lascelles Abercrombie wrote, "It was remarkable enough that Mr. Bottomley should have proved himself capable of worthily inventing a prelude to 'Lear'; it is astonishing that the success should be repeated in a prelude to 'Macbeth.' But it has become clear now that at no time in the history of English poetry since the seventeenth century has the requisite combination of dramatic and poetic talents existed until now in the person of Mr. Bottomley."

His poetry, collected in *Chambers of Imagery, First Series* (1907), *Second Series* (1912), displays the same command of vivid characterization and imaginative vigor which one finds in his poetic dramas. The beauty of Bottomley's language is only paralleled by the power of his thought.

THE END OF THE WORLD

The snow had fallen many nights and days;
The sky was come upon the earth at last,
Sifting thinly down as endlessly
As though within the system of blind planets
Something had been forgot or overdriven.
The dawn now seemed neglected in the grey,
Where mountains were unbuilt and shadowless trees
Rootlessly paused or hung upon the air.
There was no wind, but now and then a sigh
Crossed that dry falling dust and rifted it
Through crevices of slate and door and casement.

Perhaps the new moon's time was even past.
Outside, the first white twilights were too void
Until a sheep called once, as to a lamb,
And tenderness crept everywhere from it;
But now the flock must have strayed far away.
The lights across the valley must be veiled,
The smoke lost in the greyness or the dusk.
For more than three days now the snow had thatched
That cow-house roof where it had ever melted
With yellow stains from the beasts' breath inside;
But yet a dog howled there, though not quite lately.
Someone passed down the valley swift and singing,
Yes, with locks spreaded like a son of morning;
But if he seemed too tall to be a man
It was that men had been so long unseen,
Or shapes loom larger through a moving snow.
And he was gone and food had not been given him.
When snow slid from an overweighted leaf
Shaking the tree, it might have been a bird
Slipping in sleep or shelter, whirring wings;
Yet never bird fell out, save once a dead one—
And in two days the snow had covered it.
The dog had howled again—or thus it seemed
Until a lean fox passed and cried no more.
All was so safe indoors where life went on
Glad of the close enfolding snow—O glad
To be so safe and secret at its heart,
Watching the strangeness of familiar things.
They knew not what dim hours went on, went by,
For while they slept the clock stopt newly wound
As the cold hardened. Once they watched the road,
Thinking to be remembered. Once they doubted
If they had kept the sequence of the days,
Because they heard not any sound of bells.

A butterfly, that hid until the Spring
Under a ceiling's shadow, dropt, was dead.
The coldness seemed more nigh, the coldness deepened
As a sound deepens into silences;
It was of earth and came not by the air;
The earth was cooling and drew down the sky.
The air was crumbling. There was no more sky.
Rails of a broken bed charred in the grate,
And when he touched the bars he thought the sting
Came from their heat—he could not feel such cold . . .
She said, "O do not sleep,
Heart, heart of mine, keep near me. No, no; sleep.
I will not lift his fallen, quiet eyelids,
Although I know he would awaken then—
He closed them thus but not of his own will.
He can stay with me while I do not lift them."

DAWN

A thrush is tapping a stone
With a snail-shell in its beak;
A small bird hangs from a cherry
Until the stem shall break.
No waking song has begun,
And yet birds chatter and hurry
And throng in the elm's gloom
Because an owl goes home.

Evelyn Underhill

Evelyn Underhill was born in 1875 and has interested herself chiefly in metaphysical matters. Her volumes *Mysticism* (1911) and *Essentials of Mysticism and other Essays* (1920) have won

her a large following among Theosophists, and she has edited *The Cloud of Unknowing* as well as (with Rabindranath Tagore as collaborator) *The Poems of Kabir.*

Her own volumes of verse are *Immanence* (1913) and *Theophanies* (1916) which, apart from their religious appeal, are cloudy and involved. But in spite of her abstract subjects, Miss Underhill has written a few lyrics which, like the one reprinted below, have won their way in the anthologies of the period.

THE LADY POVERTY

I met her on the Umbrian hills;
  Her hair unbound, her feet unshod.
As one whom secret glory fills
  She walked, alone with God.

I met her in the city street:
  Oh, changed was all her aspect then!
With heavy eyes and weary feet
  She walked alone, with men.

A. E. Coppard

A. E. Coppard was born January 4, 1878, at Folkestone, Kent, and has lived all his life in close contact with the soil of which he writes so faithfully. Unknown until 1921, his first volume, *Adam and Eve and Pinch Me,* immediately created an enthusiastic circle of readers on both sides of the Atlantic. *Clorinda Walks in Heaven* (1922) increased the number of his readers, and with *The Black Dog* (1923) and *Fishmonger's Fiddle* (1925) his following has grown greatly in size and admiration.

Although these volumes of short tales vibrate with a prose so pointed and colorful that it is never without the glow of poetry, Coppard has also published a volume of verse. In

1922, The Golden Cockerel Press printed his *Hips and Haws,* a series of poems which no lover of Coppard's fantastic stories should miss.

THE PRODIGAL SON

When I forsook my homely town
  And bade my luck good-bye,
The lord of freedom flung me down
  His sweet scourge from the sky;
But all the passionate winds ordained
  His purpose to fulfil
Blew to a burning goal ungained,
  Left me my idle will.

Sad are the harvests I amass,
  And empty of all grain;
Thickens the dust upon the grass
  No dews shall wash again;
Nought can unclog the unconfined
  From pride so falsely kept,
Nor from my void but living mind
  May its dead dreams be swept.

Ten thousand finer dreams of sleep,
  And old songs sweet to hear,
Mock at my anguish as I keep
  My journeying otherwhere;
I would not need one kingly frown,
  Or yet bequeath one sigh,
Had I not left my shining town,
  Nor bade my heart good-bye.

Thomas Macdonagh was born in Ireland in 1878. Like his fellow-martyrs, he gave up the promise of a great career to devote himself to the liberation of his country. His poems are few in number, but all of them are filled with that intensity which made him so striking as a leader of his political group.

In company with his compatriot-poets (see page 298), he was arrested and executed after the Easter Week Rising in Dublin in 1916. The poem "Of a Poet-Patriot," although written to commemorate a fellow-singer, might well serve as his own epitaph.

OF A POET-PATRIOT

His songs were a little phrase
  Of eternal song.
Drowned in the harping of lays
  More loud and long.

His deed was a single word,
  Called out alone
In a night when no echo stirred
  To laughter or moan.

But his songs new souls shall thrill,
  The loud harps dumb,
And his deed the echoes fill
  When the dawn is come.

WISHES FOR MY SON

(*Born on St. Cecilia's Day,* 1912)

Now, my son, is life for you,
And I wish you joy of it,—

Joy of power in all you do,
Deeper passion, better wit
Than I had who had enough,
Quicker life and length thereof,
More of every gift but love.

Love I have beyond all men,
Love that now you share with me—
What have I to wish you then
But that you be good and free,
And that God to you may give
Grace in stronger days to live?

For I wish you more than I
Ever knew of glorious deed,
Though no rapture passed me by
That an eager heart could heed,
Though I followed heights and sought
Things the sequel never brought:

Wild and perilous holy things
Flaming with a martyr's blood,
And the joy that laughs and sings
Where a foe must be withstood,
Joy of headlong happy chance
Leading on the battle dance.

But I found no enemy,
No man in a world of wrong.
That Christ's word of charity
Did not render clean and strong—
Who was I to judge my kind,
Blindest groper of the blind?

God to you may give the sight
And the clear undoubting strength,
Wars to knit for single right,
Freedom's war to knit at length,
And to win, through wrath and strife,
To the sequel of my life.

But for you, so small and young,
Born on St. Cecilia's Day,
I in more harmonious song
Now for nearer joys should pray—
Simple joys: the natural growth
Of your childhood and your youth,
Courage, innocence, and truth:

These for you, so small and young,
In your hand and heart and tongue.

Seumas O'Sullivan

James Starkey was born in Dublin in 1878. Writing under the pseudonym of Seumas O'Sullivan, he contributed a great variety of prose and verse to various Irish papers. His reputation as a poet began with his appearance in *New Songs,* edited by George Russell ("A. E."). Later, he published *The Twilight People* (1905), *The Earth Lover* (1909), and *Poems* (1912).

PRAISE

Dear, they are praising your beauty,
The grass and the sky:
The sky in a silence of wonder,
The grass in a sigh.

I too would sing for your praising,
Dearest, had I
Speech as the whispering grass,
Or the silent sky.

These have an art for the praising
Beauty so high.
Sweet, you are praised in a silence,
Sung in a sigh.

Edward Thomas

(Philip) Edward Thomas, one of the little known but most individual of modern English poets, was born in 1878 and educated at Lincoln College, Oxford. For many years before he turned to verse, Thomas had a large following as a critic and author of travel books, biographies, pot-boilers. Hating his hack-work, yet unable to get free of it, he had so repressed his creative ability that he had grown doubtful concerning his own power. It needed something foreign to stir and animate what was native in him. So when Robert Frost, the New England poet, went abroad in 1912 for two years and became an intimate of Thomas's, the English critic began to write poetry.

His verse was first published under the pseudonym of "Edward Eastaway" and immediately attracted the attention of a small but enthusiastic circle. Loving, like Frost, the *minutiæ* of existence, the quaint and casual turn of ordinary life, he caught the magic of the English countryside in its unpoeticized quietude. Many of his poems are full of a slow, sad contemplation of life and a reflection of its brave futility. It is not exactly disillusion; it is rather an absence of illusion. *Poems* (1917), dedicated to Robert Frost, is full of Thomas's fidelity to little things, things as unglorified as the unfreezing of the "rock-like mud," a child's path, a list of quaint-sounding villages, birds' nests uncovered by the autumn wind, dusty nettles; the lines glow with a deep and almost abject reverence for the

soil. A subsequent collection, *Last Poems,* appeared in 1919, and a collected edition, with an introduction by Walter De la Mare, was published in 1921.

Thomas was killed at Arras, at an observatory outpost, on Easter Monday, 1917.

IF I SHOULD EVER BY CHANCE

If I should ever by chance grow rich
I'll buy Codham, Cockridden, and Childerditch,
Roses, Pyrgo, and Lapwater,
And let them all to my elder daughter.
The rent I shall ask of her will be only
Each year's first violets, white and lonely,
The first primroses and orchises—
She must find them before I do, that is.
But if she finds a blossom on furze
Without rent they shall all for ever be hers,
Codham, Cockridden, and Childerditch,
Roses, Pyrgo and Lapwater,—
I shall give them all to my elder daughter.

TALL NETTLES

Tall nettles cover up, as they have done
These many springs, the rusty harrow, the plough
Long worn out, and the roller made of stone:
Only the elm butt tops the nettles now.

This corner of the farmyard I like most:
As well as any bloom upon a flower
I like the dust on the nettles, never lost
Except to prove the sweetness of a shower.

COCK-CROW

Out of the wood of thoughts that grows by night
To be cut down by the sharp axe of light,—
Out of the night, two cocks together crow,
Cleaving the darkness with a silver blow:
And bright before my eyes twin trumpeters stand,
Heralds of splendour, one at either hand,
Each facing each as in a coat of arms:—
The milkers lace their boots up at the farms.

THE PENNY WHISTLE

The new moon hangs like an ivory bugle
In the naked frosty blue;
And the ghylls of the forest, already blackened
By Winter, are blackened anew.

The brooks that cut up and increase the forest,
As if they had never known
The sun, are roaring with black hollow voices
Betwixt rage and a moan.

But still the caravan-hut by the hollies
Like a kingfisher gleams between;
Round the mossed old hearths of the charcoal-burners,
First primroses ask to be seen.

The charcoal-burners are black, but their linen
Blows white on the line;
And white the letter the girl is reading
Under that crescent fine:

And her brother who hides apart in a thicket,
  Slowly and surely playing
On a whistle an olden nursery melody,
  Says far more than I am saying.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

Born at Hexham in 1878, Wilfrid Wilson Gibson has published over a dozen books of verse—the first four or five (see Preface) being imitative in manner and sentimentally romantic in tone. With *Daily Bread* (1910) and *Fires* (1912) Gibson executed a complete right-about-face and, with dramatic brevity, wrote a series of poems mirroring the dreams, pursuits and fears of common humanity. *Thoroughfares* (1914) marks an advance in technique and power. And though in *Livelihood* (1917) Gibson seems to be theatricalizing and merely exploiting his working-people, his later lyrics recapture the veracity of such memorable poems as "The Old Man," "The Blind Rower," and "The Machine." *Hill-Tracks* (1918) attempts to capture (as Thomas actually did) the beauty of village-names through the glamour of the English countryside; *Neighbours* (1920) again takes up the strain of a somewhat too conscious poeticizing of the casual.

PRELUDE

As one, at midnight, wakened by the call
Of golden-plovers in their seaward flight,
Who lies and listens, as the clear notes fall
Through tingling silence of the frosty night—
Who lies and listens, till the last note fails,
And then, in fancy, faring with the flock
Far over slumbering hills and dreaming dales,
Soon hears the surges break on reef and rock;
And, hearkening, till all sense of self is drowned

Within the mightier music of the deep,
No more remembers the sweet piping sound
That startled him from dull, undreaming sleep;
So I, first waking from oblivion, heard,
With heart that kindled to the call of song,
The voice of young life, fluting like a bird,
And echoed that light lilting; till, ere long,
Lured onward by that happy, singing-flight,
I caught the stormy summons of the sea,
And dared the restless deeps that, day and night,
Surge with the life-song of humanity.

THE STONE[1]

"And will you cut a stone for him,
To set above his head?
And will you cut a stone for him—
A stone for him?" she said.

Three days before, a splintered rock
Had struck her lover dead—
Had struck him in the quarry dead,
Where, careless of the warning call,
He loitered, while the shot was fired—
A lively stripling, brave and tall,
And sure of all his heart desired . . .
A flash, a shock,
A rumbling fall . . .
And, broken 'neath the broken rock,
A lifeless heap, with face of clay;
And still as any stone he lay,
With eyes that saw the end of all.

[1] From *Fires* by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson. Copyright, 1912, by The Macmillan Co. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

I went to break the news to her;
And I could hear my own heart beat
With dread of what my lips might say
But, some poor fool had sped before;
And flinging wide her father's door,
Had blurted out the news to her,
Had struck her lover dead for her,
Had struck the girl's heart dead in her,
Had struck life lifeless, at a word,
And dropped it at her feet:
Then hurried on his witless way,
Scarce knowing she had heard.

And when I came, she stood alone,
A woman turned to stone:
And, though no word at all she said,
I knew that all was known.

Because her heart was dead,
She did not sigh nor moan,
His mother wept:
She could not weep.
Her lover slept:
She could not sleep.
Three days, three nights,
She did not stir:
Three days, three nights,
Were one to her,
Who never closed her eyes
From sunset to sunrise,
From dawn to evenfall:
Her tearless, staring eyes,
That seeing naught, saw all.

The fourth night when I came from work,
I found her at my door.
"And will you cut a stone for him?"
She said: and spoke no more:
But followed me, as I went in,
And sank upon a chair;
And fixed her grey eyes on my face,
With still, unseeing stare.
And, as she waited patiently,
I could not bear to feel
Those still, grey eyes that followed me,
Those eyes that plucked the heart from me,
Those eyes that sucked the breath from me
And curdled the warm blood in me,
Those eyes that cut me to the bone,
And pierced my marrow like cold steel.

And so I rose, and sought a stone;
And cut it, smooth and square:
And, as I worked, she sat and watched,
Beside me, in her chair.
Night after night, by candlelight,
I cut her lover's name:
Night after night, so still and white,
And like a ghost she came;
And sat beside me in her chair;
And watched with eyes aflame.

She eyed each stroke;
And hardly stirred:
She never spoke
A single word:
And not a sound or murmur broke
The quiet, save the mallet-stroke.

With still eyes ever on my hands,
With eyes that seemed to burn my hands,
My wincing, overwearied hands,
She watched, with bloodless lips apart,
And silent, indrawn breath:
And every stroke my chisel cut,
Death cut still deeper in her heart:
The two of us were chiselling,
Together, I and death.

And when at length the job was done,
And I had laid the mallet by,
As if, at last, her peace were won,
She breathed his name; and, with a sigh,
Passed slowly through the open door:
And never crossed my threshold more.

Next night I laboured late, alone,
To cut her name upon the stone.

SIGHT[1]

By the lamplit stall I loitered, feasting my eyes
On colours ripe and rich for the heart's desire—
Tomatoes, redder than Krakatoa's fire,
Oranges like old sunsets over Tyre,
And apples golden-green as the glades of Paradise.

[1] From *Borderlands and Thoroughfares* by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson. Copyright, 1915, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

And as I lingered, lost in divine delight,
My heart thanked God for the goodly gift of sight
And all youth's lively senses keen and quick . . .
When suddenly, behind me in the night,
I heard the tapping of a blind man's stick.

John Masefield

John Masefield was born June 1, 1878, in Ledbury, Herefordshire. Although the son of a lawyer, he went to sea at an early age and became a wanderer for several years. At one time, in 1895, to be exact, he worked for a few months as a sort of third assistant barkeeper in Luke O'Connor's saloon, the Columbia Hotel, in New York City. The place is still there on the corner of Sixth and Greenwich Avenues. In 1897, he returned to England where he made friends with Synge in London, living, for a time, in Bloomsbury. The Royal Society of Literature awarded him the Edmond de Polignac prize for poetry in 1912. During the war, Masefield made a lecture tour in America in 1916. Since that time, he has had his home at Boar's Hill, near Oxford.

The results of his wanderings showed in his early works, *Salt-Water Ballads* (1902), *Ballads* (1903), frank and often crude poems of sailors written in their own dialect, and *A Mainsail Haul* (1905), a collection of short nautical stories. In these books Masefield possibly overemphasized passion and brutality, but, underneath the violence, he captured that highly colored realism which is the poetry of life.

It was not until he published *The Everlasting Mercy* (1911) that he became famous. Followed quickly by those remarkable long narrative poems. *The Widow in the Bye Street* (1912), *Dauber* (1912), and *The Daffodil Fields* (1913), all of these works have that peculiar blend of physical exulting and spiritual exaltation that is so striking, and so typical of Masefield. Their very rudeness is lifted to a plane of religious intensity. (See Preface.) Pictorially, Masefield is even more telling without making his language over-forceful. The finest moment in *The Widow in the Bye Street* is the portrayal of the mother

alone in her cottage; the public-house scene and the passage describing the birds following the plough are the most intense touches in *The Everlasting Mercy.* Nothing more vigorous or thrilling than the description of the storm at sea in *Dauber* has appeared in current literature.

The war, in which Masefield served with the Red Cross in France and on the Gallipoli peninsula (of which campaign he wrote a study for the government), softened his style; *Good Friday and Other Poems* (1916) is as restrained and dignified a collection as that of any of his contemporaries. *Reynard the Fox* (1919) is the best of his new manner with a return of the old vivacity.

Masefield has also written several novels of which *Multitude and Solitude* (1909) and the recent *Sard Harker* (1924) are the most outstanding; half a dozen plays, ranging from the classical solemnity of *Pompey the Great* to the hot and racy *Tragedy of Nan;* and one of the freshest, most creative critiques of *Shakespeare* (1911) of the last generation.

A comprehensive *Collected Poems,* including the later work up to *Right Royal,* appeared in 1924.

A CONSECRATION

Not of the princes and prelates with periwigged charioteers
Riding triumphantly laurelled to lap the fat of the years,—
Rather the scorned—the rejected—the men hemmed in with the spears;

The men of the tattered battalion which fights till it dies,
Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din and the cries.
The men with the broken heads and the blood running into their eyes.

Not the be-medalled Commander, beloved of the throne,
Riding cock-horse to parade when the bugles are blown,
But the lads who carried the koppie and cannot be known.

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the tramp of the road,
The slave with the sack on his shoulders pricked on with the goad,
The man with too weighty a burden, too weary a load.

The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man with the clout,
The chantyman bent at the halliards putting a tune to the shout,
The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired look-out.

Others may sing of the wine and the wealth and the mirth,
The portly presence of potentates goodly in girth;—
Mine be the dirt and the dross, the dust and scum of the earth!

Theirs be the music, the colour, the glory, the gold;
Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of mould.
Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in the rain and the cold—
Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my tales be told.
AMEN.

SEA-FEVER

I must down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face and a grey dawn breaking.

I must down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls crying.

I must down to the seas again to the vagrant gypsy life.
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

ROUNDING THE HORN

(*From "Dauber"*) [1]

Then came the cry of "Call all hands on deck!"
The Dauber knew its meaning; it was come:
Cape Horn, that tramples beauty into wreck,
And crumples steel and smites the strong man dumb.
Down clattered flying kites and staysails; some
Sang out in quick, high calls: the fair-leads skirled,
And from the south-west came the end of the world . . .

"Lay out!" the Bosun yelled. The Dauber laid
Out on the yard, gripping the yard, and feeling
Sick at the mighty space of air displayed
Below his feet, where mewing birds were wheeling.

[1] From *The Story of a Round-House* by John Masefield. Copyright, 1913, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

A giddy fear was on him; he was reeling.
He bit his lip half through, clutching the jack.
A cold sweat glued the shirt upon his back.

The yard was shaking, for a brace was loose.
He felt that he would fall; he clutched, he bent,
Clammy with natural terror to the shoes
While idiotic promptings came and went.
Snow fluttered on a wind-flaw and was spent;
He saw the water darken. Someone yelled,
"Frap it; don't stay to furl! Hold on!" He held.

Darkness came down—half darkness—in a whirl;
The sky went out, the waters disappeared.
He felt a shocking pressure of blowing hurl
The ship upon her side. The darkness speared
At her with wind; she staggered, she careered;
Then down she lay. The Dauber felt her go,
He saw her yard tilt downwards. Then the snow

Whirled all about—dense, multitudinous, cold—
Mixed with the wind's one devilish thrust and shriek,
Which whiffled out men's tears, defeated, took hold,
Flattening the flying drift against the cheek.
The yards buckled and bent, man could not speak.
The ship lay on her broadside; the wind's sound
Had devilish malice at having got her downed.

. . . . . .

How long the gale had blown he could not tell,
Only the world had changed, his life had died.
A moment now was everlasting hell.
Nature an onslaught from the weather side,
A withering rush of death, a frost that cried,
Shrieked, till he withered at the heart; a hail
Plastered his oilskins with an icy mail. . . .

"Up!" yelled the Bosun; "up and clear the wreck!"
The Dauber followed where he led; below
He caught one giddy glimpsing of the deck
Filled with white water, as though heaped with snow.
He saw the streamers of the rigging blow
Straight out like pennons from the splintered mast,
Then, all sense dimmed, all was an icy blast.

Roaring from nether hell and filled with ice,
Roaring and crashing on the jerking stage,
An utter bridle given to utter vice,
Limitless power mad with endless rage
Withering the soul; a minute seemed an age.
He clutched and hacked at ropes, at rags of sail,
Thinking that comfort was a fairy tale,

Told long ago—long, long ago—long since
Heard of in other lives—imagined, dreamed—
There where the basest beggar was a prince.
To him in torment where the tempest screamed,
Comfort and warmth and ease no longer seemed
Things that a man could know; soul, body, brain,
Knew nothing but the wind, the cold, the pain.

C. L. M.[1]

In the dark womb where I began
My mother's life made me a man.
Through all the months of human birth
Her beauty fed my common earth.

[1] From *The Story of a Round-House* by John Masefield. Copyright, 1913, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

I cannot see, nor breathe, nor stir,
But through the death of some of her.

Down in the darkness of the grave
She cannot see the life she gave.
For all her love, she cannot tell
Whether I use it ill or well,
Nor knock at dusty doors to find
Her beauty dusty in the mind.

If the grave's gates could be undone,
She would not know her little son,
I am so grown. If we should meet,
She would pass by me in the street,
Unless my soul's face let her see
My sense of what she did for me.

What have I done to keep in mind
My debt to her and womankind?
What woman's happier life repays
Her for those months of wretched days?
For all my mouthless body leech'd
Ere Birth's releasing hell was reach'd?

What have I done, or tried, or said
In thanks to that dear woman dead?
Men triumph over women still,
Men trample women's rights at will,
And man's lust roves the world untamed.

. . . . .

O grave, keep shut lest I be shamed.

SONNET[1]

Is there a great green commonwealth of Thought
Which ranks the yearly pageant, and decides
How Summer's royal progress shall be wrought,
By secret stir which in each plant abides?
Does rocking daffodil consent that she,
The snowdrop of wet winters, shall be first?
Does spotted cowslip with the grass agree
To hold her pride before the rattle burst?
And in the hedge what quick agreement goes,
When hawthorn blossoms redden to decay,
That Summer's pride shall come, the Summer's rose,
Before the flower be on the bramble spray?
Or is it, as with us, unresting strife,
And each consent a lucky gasp for life?

THE CHOICE

The Kings go by with jewelled crowns;
Their horses gleam, their banners shake, their
spears are many.
The sack of many-peopled towns
Is all their dream:
The way they take
Leaves but a ruin in the brake,
And, in the furrow that the ploughmen make,
A stampless penny; a tale, a dream.

[1] From *Good Friday and Other Poems* by John Masefield. Copyright, 1916, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

The Merchants reckon up their gold,
Their letters come, their ships arrive, their freights
are glories:
The profits of their treasures sold
They tell and sum;
Their foremen drive
Their servants, starved to half-alive,
Whose labours do but make the earth a hive
Of stinking glories; a tale, a dream.

The Priests are singing in their stalls,
Their singing lifts, their incense burns, their
praying clamours;
Yet God is as the sparrow falls,
The ivy drifts;
The votive urns
Are all left void when Fortune turns,
The god is but a marble for the kerns
To break with hammers; a tale, a dream.

O Beauty, let me know again
The green earth cold, the April rain, the quiet
waters figuring sky,
The one star risen.
So shall I pass into the feast
Not touched by King, Merchant, or Priest;
Know the red spirit of the beast,
Be the green grain;
Escape from prison.

LAUGH AND BE MERRY[1]

Laugh and be merry, remember, better the world with
a song,
Better the world with a blow in the teeth of a wrong.
Laugh, for the time is brief, a thread the length of a span.
Laugh, and be proud to belong to the old proud pageant
of man.

Laugh and be merry: remember, in olden time,
God made Heaven and Earth for joy He took in a rhyme,
Made them, and filled them full with the strong red wine
of His mirth,
The splendid joy of the stars: the joy of the earth.

So we must laugh and drink from the deep blue cup of
the sky,
Join the jubilant song of the great stars sweeping by,
Laugh, and battle, and work, and drink of the wine out-
poured
In the dear green earth, the sign of the joy of the Lord.

Laugh and be merry together, like brothers akin,
Guesting awhile in the rooms of a beautiful inn,
Glad till the dancing stops, and the lilt of the music ends.
Laugh till the game is played; and be you merry, my
friends.

[1] From *The Story of a Round-House* by John Masefield. Copyright, 1913, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, Lord Dunsany, was born July 24, 1878, and was educated at Eton and Sandhurst. He is best known as an author of fantastic fairy tales and even more fantastic plays. *The Gods of the Mountain* (1911) and *The Golden Doom* (1912) are highly dramatic and intensely poetic. *A Night at an Inn* (1916) is that peculiar novelty, an eerie and poetical melodrama.

Dunsany's prime quality is a romantic and highly colored imagination which is rich in symbolism. After the World War, in which the playwright served as captain in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, Dunsany visited America and revised the reissue of his early tales and prose poems collected in his *The Book of Wonder.*

SONGS FROM AN EVIL WOOD

I

There is no wrath in the stars,
  They do not rage in the sky;
I look from the evil wood
  And find myself wondering why.

Why do they not scream out
  And grapple star against star,
Seeking for blood in the wood
  As all things round me are?

They do not glare like the sky
  Or flash like the deeps of the wood;
But they shine softly on
  In their sacred solitude.

To their high, happy haunts
  Silence from us has flown,
She whom we loved of old
  And know it now she is gone.

When will she come again,
  Though for one second only?
She whom we loved is gone
  And the whole world is lonely.

And the elder giants come
  Sometimes, tramping from far
Through the weird and flickering light
  Made by an earthly star.

And the giant with his club,
  And the dwarf with rage in his breath,
And the elder giants from far,
  They are all the children of Death.

They are all abroad to-night
  And are breaking the hills with their brood,—
And the birds are all asleep
  Even in Plug Street Wood!

II

Somewhere lost in the haze
  The sun goes down in the cold,
And birds in this evil wood
  Chirrup home as of old;

Chirrup, stir and are still,
  On the high twigs frozen and thin.
There is no more noise of them now,
  And the long night sets in.

Of all the wonderful things
  That I have seen in the wood
I marvel most at the birds
  And their wonderful quietude.

For a giant smites with his club
  All day the tops of the hill,
Sometimes he rests at night,
  Oftener he beats them still.

And a dwarf with a grim black mane
  Raps with repeated rage
All night in the valley below
  On the wooden walls of his cage.

III

I met with Death in his country,
  With his scythe and his hollow eye
Walking the roads of Belgium.
  I looked and he passed me by.

Since he passed me by in Plug Street,
  In the wood of the evil name,
I shall not now lie with the heroes,
  I shall not share their fame;

I shall never be as they are,
  A name in the lands of the Free,
Since I looked on Death in Flanders
  And he did not look at me.

The publisher of the various anthologies of Georgian Poetry, Harold Monro, was born in Brussels in 1879 and educated at Caius College, Cambridge. He describes himself as "author, publisher, editor and book-seller." Monro founded The Poetry Bookshop in London in 1912, a unique establishment having as its object a practical relation between poetry and the public, and keeping in stock nothing but poetry, the drama, and books connected with these subjects. His quarterly, *Poetry and Drama* (discontinued during the war and revived in 1919 as *The Chapbook*), was in a sense the organ of the younger men; and his shop, in which he has lived for the last seven years except while he was in the army, became a literary center.

Monro's poetry is impelled by a peculiar mysticism, a mysticism that depicts the play between the worlds of reality and fantasy. His *Strange Meetings* (1917) and *Children of Love* (1915) present, with an originality rare among Monro's contemporaries, the relation of man not only to the earth he rose from, but to the inanimate things he moves among. Even the most whimsical of this poet's concepts have an emotional intensity beneath their skilful rhythms.

Real Property (1922) represents a still further advance. Although Monro has not lost his whimsical appraisal of "still life," the note is graver, the implications larger. Some of the poems, as Monro states in a prefatory note, are "tainted with slight Georgian affectations." But such verses as the metaphysical "Earthliness" (too long for quotation) and the simpler poems of Part Two, three of which are reprinted in the group below, mark this poet as one of the most interesting though, undeservedly, one of the least popular creators of the period.

EVERY THING

Since man has been articulate,
Mechanical, improvidently wise,
(Servant of Fate),
He has not understood the little cries
And foreign conversations of the small

Delightful creatures that have followed him
Not far behind;
Has failed to hear the sympathetic call
Of Crockery and Cutlery, those kind
Reposeful Teraphim
Of his domestic happiness; the Stool
He sat on, or the Door he entered through:
He has not thanked them, overbearing fool!
What is he coming to?

But you should listen to the talk of these.
Honest they are, and patient they have kept;
Served him without his Thank you or his Please . . .
I often heard
The gentle Bed, a sigh between each word,
Murmuring, before I slept.
The Candle, as I blew it, cried aloud,
Then bowed,
And in a smoky argument
Into the darkness went.
The Kettle puffed a tentacle of breath:—
"Pooh! I have boiled his water, I don't know
Why; and he always says I boil too slow.
He never calls me 'Sukie, dear,' and oh,
I wonder why I squander my desire
Sitting submissive on his kitchen fire."

Now the old Copper Basin suddenly
Rattled and tumbled from the shelf,
Bumping and crying: "I can fall by myself;
Without a woman's hand
To patronize and coax and flatter me,
I understand
The lean and poise of gravitable land."

It gave a raucous and tumultuous shout,
Twisted itself convulsively about,
Rested upon the floor, and, while I stare,
It stares and grins at me.

The old impetuous Gas above my head
Begins irascibly to flare and fret,
Wheezing into its epileptic jet,
Reminding me I ought to go to bed.

The Rafters creak; an Empty-Cupboard door
Swings open; now a wild Plank of the floor
Breaks from its joist, and leaps behind my foot.
Down from the chimney, half a pound of Soot
Tumbles and lies, and shakes itself again.
The Putty cracks against the window-pane.
A piece of Paper in the basket shoves
Another piece, and toward the bottom moves.
My independent Pencil, while I write,
Breaks at the point: the ruminating Clock
Stirs all its body and begins to rock,
Warning the waiting presence of the Night,
Strikes the dead hour, and tumbles to the plain
Ticking of ordinary work again.

You do well to remind me, and I praise
Your strangely individual foreign ways.
You call me from myself to recognize
Companionship in your unselfish eyes.
I want your dear acquaintances, although
I pass you arrogantly over, throw
Your lovely sounds, and squander them along
My busy days. I'll do you no more wrong.

Purr for me, Sukie, like a faithful cat.
You, my well trampled Boots, and you, my Hat,
Remain my friends: I feel, though I don't speak,
Your touch grow kindlier from week to week.
It well becomes our mutual happiness
To go toward the same end more or less.
There is not much dissimilarity,
Not much to choose, I know it well, in fine,
Between the purposes of you and me,
And your eventual Rubbish Heap, and mine.

CITY-STORM

The heavy sounds are over-sweet
That droop above the hooded street,
At any moment ripe to fall and lie,
And when the Wind will swagger up the town
They'll bend a moment, then will fly
All clattering down.

Troupes come and go of urchin breeze:
They flick your face or smack the trees,
Then round the corner spin and leap
With whistling cries,
Rake their rubbish in a heap
And throw it in your eyes.

(Much preparation of the earth and air
Is needed everywhere
Before that first large drop of rain can fall.)

Smells of the Sea, or inland Grass,
Come staring through the town and pass.

Brilliant old Memories drive in state
Along the way, but cannot wait;
And many a large unusual bird
Hovers across the sky, half-heard.

But listen. It is He;
At last he comes:
Gigantic tyrant panting through the street,
Slamming the windows of our little homes,
Banging the doors, knocking the chimneys down.
Oh, his loud tramp: how scornfully he can meet
Great citizens, and lash them with his sleet!
Everything will be altered in our town.

He'll wipe the film of habit clean away,
While he remains,
His cloak is over everything we do,
And the whole town complains:—

A sombre scroll;
An inner room.
A crystal bowl:
Waters of gloom.
Oh, the darkened house—
Into silence creep!
The world is cold.
All people weep.

MAN CARRYING BALE

The tough hand closes gently on the load;
  Out of the mind a voice
Calls "Lift!" and the arms, remembering well their work,
  Lengthen and pause for help.

Then a slow ripple flows along the body,
While all the muscles call to one another:
"Lift!" and the bulging bale
Floats like a butterfly in June.

So moved the earliest carrier of bales,
And the same watchful sun
Glowed through his body feeding it with light.
So will the last one move,
And halt, and dip his head, and lay his load
Down, and the muscles will relax and tremble . . .
Earth, you designed your man
Beautiful both in labour and repose.

THE NIGHTINGALE NEAR THE HOUSE

Here is the soundless cypress on the lawn:
It listens, listens. Taller trees beyond
Listen. The moon at the unruffled pond
Stares. And you sing, you sing.

That star-enchanted song falls through the air
From lawn to lawn down terraces of sound,
Darts in white arrows on the shadowed ground;
And all the night you sing.

My dreams are flowers to which you are a bee
As all night long I listen, and my brain
Receives your song; then loses it again
In moonlight on the lawn.

Now is your voice a marble high and white,
Then like a mist on fields of paradise,
Now is a raging fire, then is like ice,
Then breaks, and it is dawn.

One of the most amazing figures in modern poetry is Charlotte Mew. An exceedingly reticent person as well as a hermit-like poet, she has published only one book, yet that small collection contains some of the finest poetry of our times.

In 1916, *The Farmer's Bride,* a paper-covered pamphlet, appeared in England. It contained just seventeen poems, the pruned fruit of many years. *Saturday Market* (1921) is the American edition of this volume with eleven poems added. Had Miss Mew printed nothing but the original booklet, it would have been sufficient to rank her among the most distinctive and intense of living poets. Hers is the distillation, the essence of emotion, rather than the stirring up of passions. Her most memorable work is in dramatic projections and poignant monologues (unfortunately too long to quote) like "The Changeling," with its fantastic pathos, and that powerful meditation, "Madeleine in Church." But lyrics as swift as "Sea Love," or as ageless as "Song," with its simple finality, or as hymn-like as "I Have Been Through the Gates" are equally sure of their place in English literature. They are, in common with all of Miss Mew's contributions, disturbing in their direct beauty; full of a speech that is noble and profound without ever becoming pompous. Apart from her other qualities, Miss Mew's work is a series of triumphs in condensation.

IN THE FIELDS

Lord, when I look at lovely things which pass,
  Under old trees the shadow of young leaves
Dancing to please the wind along the grass,
  Or the gold stillness of the August sun on the August sheaves;
Can I believe there is a heavenlier world than this?
  And if there is
Will the strange heart of any everlasting thing
  Bring me these dreams that take my breath away?
They come at evening with the home-flying rooks and the scent of hay,
  Over the fields. They come in Spring.

TO A CHILD IN DEATH

You would have scoffed if we had told you yesterday
Love made us feel—or so it was with me—like some great bird
  Trying to hold and shelter you in its strong wing;—
A gay little shadowy smile would have tossed us back such a solemn word,
  And it was not for that you were listening
  When so quietly you slipped away
With half the music of the world unheard.
What shall we do with this strange Summer, meant for you,—
  Dear, if we see the Winter through
  What shall be done with Spring—?
This, this is the victory of the grave; here is death's sting.
That it is not strong enough, our strongest wing.

But what of His who like a Father pitieth—?
His Son was also, once, a little thing,
The wistfullest child that ever drew breath,
Chased by a sword from Bethlehem and in the busy house at Nazareth
Playing with little rows of nails, watching the carpenter's hammer swing,
Long years before His hands and feet were tied
And by a hammer and the three great nails He died,
  Of youth, of Spring,
Of sorrow, of loneliness, of victory the king,
  Under the shadow of that wing.

SEA LOVE

Tide be runnin' the great world over:
'Twas only last June month I mind that we
Was thinkin' the toss and the call in the breast of the lover
So everlastin' as the sea.

Here's the same little fishes that sputter and swim,
Wi' the moon's old glim on the grey, wet sand;
An' him no more to me nor me to him
Than the wind goin' over my hand.

I HAVE BEEN THROUGH THE GATES

His heart, to me, was a place of palaces and pinnacles and shining towers;
I saw it then as we see things in dreams,—I do not remember how long I slept;
I remember the trees, and the high, white walls, and how the sun was always on the towers;
The walls are standing to-day, and the gates: I have been through the gates, I have groped, I have crept
Back, back. There is dust in the streets, and blood; they are empty; darkness is over them;
His heart is a place with the lights gone out, forsaken by great winds and the heavenly rain, unclean and unswept,
Like the heart of the holy city, old, blind, beautiful Jerusalem,
Over which Christ wept.

SONG

Love, Love to-day, my dear,
Love is not always here;
Wise maids know how soon grows sere
The greenest leaf of Spring;
But no man knoweth
Whither it goeth
When the wind bloweth
So frail a thing.

Love, Love, my dear, to-day,
If the ship's in the bay,
If the bird has come your way
That sings on summer trees;
When his song faileth
And the ship saileth
No voice availeth
To call back these.

T. M. Kettle

Thomas M. Kettle was born in Artane County, Dublin, in 1880 and was educated at University College, where he won the Gold Medal for Oratory. His extraordinary faculty for grasping an intricate problem and crystallizing it in an epigram, or scoring his adversaries with one bright flash, was apparent even then. He was admitted to the bar in 1905 but soon abandoned the law to devote himself to journalism, which, because of his remarkable style, never remained journalism in his hands. In 1906 he entered politics; in 1910 he was re-elected for East Tyrone. Even his bitterest opponents conceded that Tom Kettle (as he was called by friend and enemy)

was the most honorable of fighters; they acknowledged his honesty, courage and devotion to the cause of a United Ireland —and respected his penetrating wit. He once spoke of a Mr. Healy as "a brilliant calamity" and satirized a long-winded speaker by saying, "Mr. Long knows a sentence should have a beginning, but he quite forgets it should also have an end."

"An Irish torch-bearer" (so E. B. Osborn calls him), Kettle fell in action at Ginchy, leading his Fusiliers in September, 1916. The uplifted poem to his daughter was written shortly before his death.

TO MY DAUGHTER BETTY, THE GIFT OF GOD

In wiser days, my darling rosebud, blown
To beauty proud as was your mother's prime,
In that desired, delayed, incredible time,
You'll ask why I abandoned you, my own,
And the dear heart that was your baby throne,
To dice with death. And, oh! they'll give you rhyme
And reason: some will call the thing sublime,
And some decry it in a knowing tone.

So here, while the mad guns curse overhead,
And tired men sigh with mud for couch and floor,
Know that we fools, now with the foolish dead,
Died not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor,—
But for a dream, born in a herdsman's shed,
And for the secret Scripture of the poor.

Alfred Noyes

Alfred Noyes was born at Staffordshire, September 16, 1880. He is one of the few contemporary poets who have been fortunate enough to write a kind of poetry that is not only extremely saleable but popular with many classes of people.

His first book, *The Loom of Years* (1902), was published when he was only 22 years old, and *Poems* (1904) intensified the promise of this first publication. Swinburne, grown old and living in retirement, was so struck with Noyes's talent that he had the young poet out to read to him. Unfortunately, Noyes has not developed his gifts as deeply as his admirers have hoped. His poetry, extremely straightforward and rhythmical, has often degenerated into cheap sentimentalities and cheaper tirades; it has frequently attempted to express programs and profundities far beyond Noyes's power.

What is most appealing about his best verse is its ease and heartiness; this singer's gift lies in the almost personal bond established between the poet and his public. It may be said that people have such a good time reading his vivacious lines because Noyes had such a good time writing them. Rhyme in a thumping rhythm seems to be not merely his trade but his morning exercise. Noyes's own relish quickens glees and catches like *Forty Singing Seamen* (1907), the lusty choruses in *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* (1913), the seemingly inspired nonsense of the earlier *Forest of Wild Thyme* (1905).

The least popular work of Noyes is, as a unified product, his most remarkable performance. It is an epic in twelve books of blank verse, *Drake* (1908), a glowing pageant of the sea and England's drama upon it. It is a spirited echo of the maritime Elizabethans; a vivid and orchestral work interspersed with lyric passages and brisk songs. The companion volume, an attempted reconstruction of the literary phase of the same period, is less successful; but these *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* (which introduce Shakespeare, Marlowe, Drayton, Raleigh, Ben Jonson, and other immortals) are alive and colorful, if somewhat too insistently rollicking and smoothly lilting.

His eight volumes were assembled in 1913 and published in two books of *Collected Poems* (Frederick A. Stokes Company). Although many of these nine hundred pages are doomed to an early death—are, in fact, already extinct—Noyes will remain a poet pleasant to read because of his "Sherwood," the lilt of "The Barrel Organ," the galloping "The Highwayman" and a handful of other ballads.

SHERWOOD

Sherwood in the twilight, is Robin Hood awake?
Grey and ghostly shadows are gliding through the brake;
Shadows of the dappled deer, dreaming of the morn,
Dreaming of a shadowy man that winds a shadowy horn.

Robin Hood is here again: all his merry thieves
Hear a ghostly bugle-note shivering through the leaves,
Calling as he used to call, faint and far away,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Merry, merry England has kissed the lips of June:
All the wings of fairyland were here beneath the moon;
Like a flight of rose-leaves fluttering in a mist
Of opal and ruby and pearl and amethyst.

Merry, merry England is waking as of old,
With eyes of blither hazel and hair of brighter gold:
For Robin Hood is here again beneath the bursting spray
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Love is in the greenwood building him a house
Of wild rose and hawthorn and honeysuckle boughs;
Love is in the greenwood: dawn is in the skies;
And Marian is waiting with a glory in her eyes.

Hark! The dazzled laverock climbs the golden steep:
Marian is waiting: is Robin Hood asleep?
Round the fairy grass-rings frolic elf and fay,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Oberon, Oberon, rake away the gold,
Rake away the red leaves, roll away the mould,
Rake away the gold leaves, roll away the red,
And wake Will Scarlett from his leafy forest bed.

Friar Tuck and Little John are riding down together
With quarter-staff and drinking-can and grey goose-feather;
The dead are coming back again; the years are rolled away
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Softly over Sherwood the south wind blows;
All the heart of England hid in every rose
Hears across the greenwood the sunny whisper leap,
Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep?

Hark, the voice of England wakes him as of old
And, shattering the silence with a cry of brighter gold,
Bugles in the greenwood echo from the steep,
Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep?

Where the deer are gliding down the shadowy glen
All across the glades of fern he calls his merry men;
Doublets of the Lincoln green glancing through the May,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day;

Calls them and they answer: from aisles of oak and ash
Rings the *Follow! Follow!* and the boughs begin to crash;
The ferns begin to flutter and the flowers begin to fly;
And through the crimson dawning the robber band goes by.

Robin! Robin! Robin! All his merry thieves
Answer as the bugle-note shivers through the leaves:
Calling as he used to call, faint and far away,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

THE BARREL-ORGAN

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street
  In the City as the sun sinks low;
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet
  And fulfilled it with the sunset glow;
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain
  That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light;
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again
  In the Symphony that rules the day and night.
And now it's marching onward through the realms of old romance,
  And trolling out a fond familiar tune,
And now it's roaring cannon down to fight the King of France,
  And now it's prattling softly to the moon.
And all around the organ there's a sea without a shore
  Of human joys and wonders and regrets;
To remember and to recompense the music evermore
  For what the cold machinery forgets . . .

Yes; as the music changes,
  Like a prismatic glass,
It takes the light and ranges
  Through all the moods that pass;

Dissects the common carnival
Of passions and regrets,
And gives the world a glimpse of all
The colours it forgets.

And there *La Traviata* sighs
Another sadder song;
And there *Il Trovatore* cries
A tale of deeper wrong;
And bolder knights to battle go
With sword and shield and lance,
Than ever here on earth below
Have whirled into—a dance!—

Go down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)
And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland;
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)

The cherry-trees are seas of bloom and soft perfume and sweet perfume,
The cherry-trees are seas of bloom (and oh, so near to London!)
And there they say, when dawn is high and all the world's a blaze of sky
The cuckoo, though he's very shy, will sing a song for London.

The nightingale is rather rare and yet they say you'll hear him there
At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to London!)

The linnet and the throstle, too, and after dark the long
halloo
And golden-eyed *tu-whit, tu-whoo* of owls that ogle
London.

For Noah hardly knew a bird of any kind that isn't heard
At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to
London!)
And when the rose begins to pout and all the chestnut
spires are out
You'll hear the rest without a doubt, all chorusing for
London:—

*Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-
time;*
*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from
London!)*
*And you shall wander hand in hand with love in sum-
mer's wonderland;*
*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from
London!)*

And then the troubadour begins to thrill the golden
street,
In the city as the sun sinks low;
And in all the gaudy busses there are scores of weary
feet
Marking time, sweet time, with a dull mechanic beat,
And a thousand hearts are plunging to a love they'll never
meet,
Through the meadows of the sunset, through the poppies
and the wheat,
In the land where the dead dreams go.

Verdi, Verdi, when you wrote *Il Trovatore* did you dream
Of the City when the sun sinks low,
Of the organ and the monkey and the many-coloured stream
On the Piccadilly pavement, of the myriad eyes that seem
To be litten for a moment with a wild Italian gleam
As *A che la morte* parodies the world's eternal theme
And pulses with the sunset-glow?

There's a thief, perhaps, that listens with a face of frozen stone
In the City as the sun sinks low;
There's a portly man of business with a balance of his own,
There's a clerk and there's a butcher of a soft reposeful tone,
And they're all of them returning to the heavens they have known:
They are crammed and jammed in busses and—they're each of them alone
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a labourer that listens to the voices of the dead
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And his hand begins to tremble and his face is rather red
As he sees a loafer watching him and—there he turns his head
And stares into the sunset where his April love is fled,
For he hears her softly singing and his lonely soul is led
Through the land where the dead dreams go . . .

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street
In the City as the sun sinks low;

Though the music's only Verdi there's a world to make it sweet
Just as yonder yellow sunset where the earth and heaven meet
Mellows all the sooty City! Hark, a hundred thousand feet
Are marching on to glory through the poppies and the wheat
In the land where the dead dreams go.

So it's Jeremiah, Jeremiah,
What have you to say
When you meet the garland girls
Tripping on their way?
All around my gala hat
I wear a wreath of roses
(A long and lonely year it is
I've waited for the May!)
If any one should ask you,
The reason why I wear it is—
My own love, my true love, is coming
home to-day.

And it's buy a bunch of violets for the lady
(*It's lilac-time in London; it's lilac-time in London!*)
Buy a bunch of violets for the lady;
While the sky burns blue above:

On the other side the street you'll find it shady
(*It's lilac-time in London it's lilac-time in London!*)
But buy a bunch of violets for the lady,
And tell her she's your own true love.

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street
In the City as the sun sinks glittering and slow;
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet
And enriched it with the harmonies that make a song complete
In the deeper heavens of music where the night and morning meet,
As it dies into the sunset glow;
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain
That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light,
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And there, as the music changes,
The song runs round again;
Once more it turns and ranges
Through all its joy and pain:
Dissects the common carnival
Of passions and regrets;
And the wheeling world remembers all
The wheeling song forgets.

Once more *La Traviata* sighs
Another sadder song:
Once more *Il Trovatore* cries
A tale of deeper wrong;
Once more the knights to battle go
With sword and shield and lance
Till once, once more, the shattered foe
Has whirled into—a dance!

Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;
Come Down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)
And you shall wander hand in hand with Love in summer's wonderland,
Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)

EPILOGUE

(*From "The Flower of Old Japan"*)

Carol, every violet has
Heaven for a looking-glass!

Every little valley lies
Under many-clouded skies;
Every little cottage stands
Girt about with boundless lands.
Every little glimmering pond
Claims the mighty shores beyond—
Shores no seamen ever hailed,
Seas no ship has ever sailed.

All the shores when day is done
Fade into the setting sun,
So the story tries to teach
More than can be told in speech.

Beauty is a fading flower,
Truth is but a wizard's tower,
Where a solemn death-bell tolls,
And a forest round it rolls.

We have come by curious ways
To the light that holds the days;
We have sought in haunts of fear
For that all-enfolding sphere:
And lo! it was not far, but near.
We have found, O foolish-fond,
The shore that has no shore beyond.

Deep in every heart it lies
With its untranscended skies;
For what heaven should bend above
Hearts that own the heaven of love?

Carol, Carol, we have come
Back to heaven, back to home.

Padraic Colum

Padraic Colum was born at Longford, Ireland (in the same county as Oliver Goldsmith), December 8, 1881, and was educated at the local schools. At 20 he was a member of a group that created the Irish National Theatre, afterwards called The Abbey Theatre.

Colum began as a dramatist with *Broken Soil* (1904), *The Land* (1905), *Thomas Muskerry* (1910), and this early dramatic influence has colored much of his work, his best poetry being in the form of dramatic lyrics. *Wild Earth,* his most notable collection of verse, first appeared in 1909, and an amplified edition of it was published in America in 1916. Colum himself had come to America (where he has lived ever since) shortly before that date; his *Dramatic Poems* appeared in 1922.

Besides his other gifts, Colum is eminently successful as an adapter, sensitive as a critic, and deservedly popular as a teller of tales for children.

THE PLOUGHER

Sunset and silence! A man: around him earth savage, earth broken;
Beside him two horses—a plough!

Earth savage, earth broken, the brutes, the dawn man there in the sunset,
And the Plough that is twin to the Sword, that is founder of cities!

"Brute-tamer, plough-maker, earth-breaker! Can'st hear?
"There are ages between us.
"Is it praying you are as you stand there alone in the sunset?

"Surely our sky-born gods can be naught to you, earth child and earth-master?
"Surely your thoughts are of Pan, or of Wotan, or Dana?

"Yet, why give thought to the gods? Has Pan led your brutes where they stumble?
"Has Dana numbed pain of the child-bed, or Wotan put hands to your plough?

"What matter your foolish reply! O man, standing lone and bowed earthward,
"Your task is a day near its close. Give thanks to the night-giving God."

. . . . . .

Slowly the darkness falls, the broken lands blend with the savage;
The brute-tamer stands by the brutes, a head's breadth only above them.

A head's breadth? Ay, but therein is hell's depth, and
the height up to heaven,
And the thrones of the gods and their halls, their chariots,
purples, and splendors.

AN OLD WOMAN OF THE ROADS

O, to have a little house!
To own the hearth and stool and all!
The heaped up sods upon the fire,
The pile of turf against the wall!

To have a clock with weights and chains
And pendulum swinging up and down!
A dresser filled with shining delph,
Speckled and white and blue and brown!

I could be busy all the day
Clearing and sweeping hearth and floor,
And fixing on their shelf again
My white and blue and speckled store!

I could be quiet there at night
Beside the fire and by myself,
Sure of a bed and loth to leave
The ticking clock and the shining delph!

Och! but I'm weary of mist and dark,
And roads where there's never a house nor bush,
And tired I am of bog and road,
And the crying wind and the lonesome hush!

And I am praying to God on high,
And I am praying Him night and day,
For a little house—a house of my own—
Out of the wind's and the rain's way.

Joseph Campbell

(*Seosamh MacCathmhaoil*)

Joseph Campbell was born in Belfast in 1881, and is not only a poet but an artist; he made all the illustrations for *The Rushlight* (1906), a volume of his own poems. Writing under the Gaelic form of his name, he has published half a dozen books of verse, the most striking of which is *The Mountainy Singer,* first published in Dublin in 1909.

I AM THE MOUNTAINY SINGER

I am the mountainy singer—
The voice of the peasant's dream,
The cry of the wind on the wooded hill,
The leap of the fish in the stream.

Quiet and love I sing—
The carn on the mountain crest,
The *cailin* in her lover's arms,
The child at its mother's breast.

Beauty and peace I sing—
The fire on the open hearth,
The *cailleach* spinning at her wheel,
The plough in the broken earth.

Travail and pain I sing—
The bride on the childing bed,
The dark man laboring at his rhymes,
The ewe in the lambing shed.

Sorrow and death I sing—
The canker come on the corn,
The fisher lost in the mountain loch,
The cry at the mouth of morn.

No other life I sing,
For I am sprung of the stock
That broke the hilly land for bread,
And built the nest in the rock!

THE OLD WOMAN

As a white candle
  In a holy place,
So is the beauty
  Of an aged face.

As the spent radiance
  Of the winter sun,
So is a woman
  With her travail done,

Her brood gone from her,
  And her thoughts as still
As the waters
  Under a ruined mill.

John Freeman, born in 1881 in London, has published several volumes of pleasantly descriptive verse. His first volume appeared in 1909; since then, his two most distinctive books are *Stone Trees* (1916) and *Memories of Childhood* (1919).

A collected edition of the poems from the previous volumes was published in 1920 under the title *Poems New and Old.* In the same year, Freeman was awarded the Hawthornden prize. Although he has written a great quantity of love lyrics, Freeman's landscapes are more distinctive than his objective work; he is happiest in purely atmospheric pieces.

STONE TREES

Last night a sword-light in the sky
Flashed a swift terror on the dark.
In that sharp light the fields did lie
Naked and stone-like; each tree stood
Like a tranced woman, bound and stark.
Far off the wood
With darkness ridged the riven dark.

And cows astonished stared with fear,
And sheep crept to the knees of cows,
And conies to their burrows slid,
And rooks were still in rigid boughs,
And all things else were still or hid.
From all the wood
Came but the owl's hoot, ghostly, clear.

In that cold trance the earth was held
It seemed an age, or time was nought.
Sure never from that stone-like field

Sprang golden corn, nor from those chill
Grey granite trees was music wrought.
In all the wood
Even the tall poplar hung stone still.

It seemed an age, or time was none . . .
Slowly the earth heaved out of sleep
And shivered, and the trees of stone
Bent and sighed in the gusty wind,
And rain swept as birds flocking sweep.
Far off the wood
Rolled the slow thunders on the wind.

From all the wood came no brave bird,
No song broke through the close-fall'n night,
Nor any sound from cowering herd:
Only a dog's long lonely howl
When from the window poured pale light.
And from the wood
The hoot came ghostly of the owl.

THE FUGITIVE

In the hush of early even
The clouds came flocking over,
Till the last wind fell from heaven
And no bird cried.

Darkly the clouds were flocking,
Shadows moved and deepened,
Then paused; the poplar's rocking
Ceased; the light hung still

Like a painted thing, and deadly.
Then from the cloud's side flickered
Sharp lightning, thrusting madly
At the cowering fields.

Thrice the fierce cloud lighten'd
Down the hill slow thunder trembled;
Day in her cave grew frightened,
Crept away, and died.

Lascelles Abercrombie

Lascelles Abercrombie was born in 1881, at Ashton-upon-Mersey (near Manchester). He was educated at Malcolm College and Manchester University. Since then, he has engaged in a variety of professions; at present he is teaching literature at the University at Leeds.

Like Masefield, he gained his reputation rapidly; totally unknown until 1909, upon the publication of *Interludes and Poems*, he was recognized as one of the greatest metaphysical poets of his period. *Emblems of Love* (1912), the ripest collection of his blank verse dialogues, justified the enthusiasm of his admirers.

Many of Abercrombie's poems, the best of which are too long to quote, are founded on scriptural themes, but his blank verse is biblical neither in mood nor in manner. It is the undercurrent rather than the surface of his verse which moves with a strong religious conviction. Abercrombie's images are daring and brilliant; his lines, sometimes too closely packed, glow with an intensity that is spiritual and yet fervently human.

As a dramatist, Abercrombie has achieved a series of undoubted though scarcely popular successes with *Deborah* (1914), *Four Short Plays* (1921) and *Phoenix* (1923), brilliantly written though not eminently actable pieces. His knotted, almost tortured, style presents many difficulties to the performers as well as audiences; but, once the speech is mastered, a swift imagination and a vividly dramatic mind are disclosed.

Latterly, Abercrombie's concern with education has prompted him to assume the rôle of philosopher rather than that of poet; *Towards a Theory of Art* (1923) being his most recent work in prose.

SONG

(*From "Judith"*)

Balkis was in her marble town,
And shadow over the world came down.
Whiteness of walls, towers and piers,
That all day dazzled eyes to tears,
Turned from being white-golden flame,
And like the deep-sea blue became.
Balkis into her garden went;
Her spirit was in discontent
Like a torch in restless air.
Joylessly she wandered there,
And saw her city's azure white
Lying under the great night,
Beautiful as the memory
Of a worshipping world would be
In the mind of a god, in the hour
When he must kill his outward power;
And, coming to a pool where trees
Grew in double greeneries,
Saw herself, as she went by
The water, walking beautifully,
And saw the stars shine in the glance
Of her eyes, and her own fair countenance
Passing, pale and wonderful,
Across the night that filled the pool.

And cruel was the grief that played
With the queen's spirit; and she said:
"What do I here, reigning alone?
For to be unloved is to be alone.
There is no man in all my land
Dare my longing understand;
The whole folk like a peasant bows
Lest its look should meet my brows
And be harmed by this beauty of mine.
I burn their brains as I were sign
Of God's beautiful anger sent
To master them with punishment
Of beauty that must pour distress
On hearts grown dark with ugliness.
But it is I am the punisht one.
Is there no man, is there none,
In whom my beauty will but move
The lust of a delighted love;
In whom some spirit of God so thrives
That we may wed our lonely lives.
Is there no man, is there none?"—
She said, "I will go to Solomon."

EPILOGUE

What shall we do for Love these days?
How shall we make an altar-blaze
To smite the horny eyes of men
With the renown of our Heaven,
And to the unbelievers prove
Our service to our dear god, Love?
What torches shall we lift above

The crowd that pushes through the mire,
To amaze the dark heads with strange fire?
I should think I were much to blame,
If never I held some fragrant flame
Above the noises of the world,
And openly 'mid men's hurrying stares,
Worshipt before the sacred fears
That are like flashing curtains furl'd
Across the presence of our lord Love.
Nay, would that I could fill the gaze
Of the whole earth with some great praise
Made in a marvel for men's eyes,
Some tower of glittering masonries,
Therein such a spirit flourishing
Men should see what my heart can sing:
All that Love hath done to me
Built into stone, a visible glee;
Marble carried to gleaming height
As moved aloft by inward delight;
Not as with toil of chisels hewn,
But seeming poised in a mighty tune.

For of all those who have been known
To lodge with our kind host, the sun,
I envy one for just one thing:
In Cordova of the Moors
There dwelt a passion-minded King,
Who set great bands of marble-hewers
To fashion his heart's thanksgiving
In a tall palace, shapen so
All the wondering world might know
The joy he had of his Moorish lass.
His love, that brighter and larger was
Than the starry places, into firm stone

He sent, as if the stone were glass
Fired and into beauty blown.
    Solemn and invented gravely
In its bulk the fabric stood,
Even as Love, that trusteth bravely
In its own exceeding good
To be better than the waste
Of time's devices; grandly spaced,
Seriously the fabric stood.
But over it all a pleasure went
Of carven delicate ornament,
Wreathing up like ravishment,
Mentioning in sculptures twined
The blitheness Love hath in his mind;
And like delighted senses were
The windows, and the columns there
Made the following sight to ache
As the heart that did them make.
Well I can see that shining song
Flowering there, the upward throng
Of porches, pillars and windowed walls,
Spires like piercing panpipe calls,
Up to the roof's snow-cloudy flight;
All glancing in the Spanish light
White as water of arctic tides,
Save an amber dazzle on sunny sides.
You had said, the radiant sheen
Of that palace might have been
A young god's fantasy, ere he came
His serious worlds and suns to frame;
Such an immortal passion
Quiver'd among the slim hewn stone.
And in the nights it seemed a jar
Cut in the substance of a star,

Wherein a wine, that will be poured
Some time for feasting Heaven, was stored.
But within this fretted shell,
The wonder of Love made visible,
The King a private gentle mood
There placed, of pleasant quietude.
For right amidst there was a court,
Where always muskèd silences
Listened to water and to trees;
And herbage of all fragrant sort,—
Lavender, lad's love, rosemary,
Basil, tansy, centaury,—
Was the grass of that orchard, hid
Love's amazements all amid.
Jarring the air with rumour cool,
Small fountains played into a pool
With sound as soft as the barley's hiss
When its beard just sprouting is;
Whence a young stream, that trod on moss,
Prettily rimpled the court across.
And in the pool's clear idleness,
Moving like dreams through happiness,
Shoals of small bright fishes were;
In and out weed-thickets bent
Perch and carp, and sauntering went
With mounching jaws and eyes a-stare;
Or on a lotus leaf would crawl,
A brinded loach to bask and sprawl,
Tasting the warm sun ere it dipt
Into the water; but quick as fear
Back his shining brown head slipt
To crouch on the gravel of his lair,
Where the cooled sunbeams broke in wrack,
Spilt shatter'd gold about his back.

So within that green-veiled air,
Within that white-walled quiet, where
Innocent water thought aloud,—
Childish prattle that must make
The wise sunlight with laughter shake
On the leafage overbowed,—
Often the King and his love-lass
Let the delicious hours pass.
All the outer world could see
Graved and sawn amazingly
Their love's delighted riotise,
Fixt in marble for all men's eyes;
But only these twain could abide
In the cool peace that withinside
Thrilling desire and passion dwelt;
They only knew the still meaning spelt
By Love's flaming script, which is
God's word written in ecstasies.
And where is now that palace gone,
All the magical skill'd stone,
All the dreaming towers wrought
By Love as if no more than thought
The unresisting marble was?
How could such a wonder pass?
Ah, it was but built in vain
Against the stupid horns of Rome,
That pusht down into the common loam
The loveliness that shone in Spain.
But we have raised it up again!
A loftier palace, fairer far,
Is ours, and one that fears no war.
Safe in marvellous walls we are;
Wondering sense like builded fires,
High amazement of desires,

Delight and certainty of love,
Closing around, roofing above
Our unapproacht and perfect hour
Within the splendours of love's power.

WOMAN'S BEAUTY

(*From "Vashti"*)

What thing shall be held up to woman's beauty?
Where are the bounds of it? Yea, what is all
The world, but an awning scaffolded amid
The waste perilous Eternity, to lodge
This Heaven-wander'd princess, woman's beauty?
The East and West kneel down to thee, the North
And South; and all for thee their shoulders bear
The load of fourfold space. As yellow morn
Runs on the slippery waves of the spread sea,
Thy feet are on the griefs and joys of men
That shine to be thy causey. Out of tears
Indeed, and blitheness, murder and lust and love,
Whatever has been passionate in clay,
Thy flesh was tempered. Behold in thy body
The yearnings of all men measured and told,
Insatiate endless agonies of desire
Given thy flesh, the meaning of thy shape!
What beauty is there, but thou makest it?
How is earth good to look on, woods and fields,
The season's garden, and the courageous hills,
All this green raft of earth moored in the seas?
The manner of the sun to ride the air,
The stars God has imagined for the night?
What's this behind them, that we cannot near,
Secret still on the point of being blabbed,

The ghost in the world that flies from being named?
Where do they get their beauty from, all these?
They do but glaze a lantern lit for man,
And woman's beauty is the flame therein.

James Stephens

James Stephens was born in Dublin in February, 1882. Stephens was discovered in an office and saved from clerical slavery by George Russell ("A. E."). Always a poet, Stephens's most poetic moments are in his highly colored prose. And yet, although the finest of his novels, *The Crock of Gold* (1912), contains more wild fantasy and quaint imagery than all his volumes of verse, his *Insurrections* (1909) and *The Hill of Vision* (1912) reveal a rebellious spirit that is at once hotly ironic and coolly whimsical. *Green Branches* (1916) and *Reincarnations* (1918) are later volumes of his verse. A splendid adaptation of *Irish Fairy Tales* appeared in 1920. Early in 1925 Stephens visited America for the first time, touring the greater part of the country.

Stephens's outstanding characteristic is his delightful blend of incongruities—he combines in his verse the grotesque, the buoyant and the profound. No fresher or more brightly vigorous imagination has come out of Ireland since J. M. Synge.

THE SHELL

And then I pressed the shell
Close to my ear
And listened well,
And straightway like a bell
Came low and clear
The slow, sad murmur of the distant seas,
Whipped by an icy breeze
Upon a shore

Wind-swept and desolate.
It was a sunless strand that never bore
The footprint of a man,
Nor felt the weight
Since time began
Of any human quality or stir
Save what the dreary winds and waves incur.
And in the hush of waters was the sound
Of pebbles rolling round,
For ever rolling with a hollow sound.
And bubbling sea-weeds as the waters go
Swish to and fro
Their long, cold tentacles of slimy grey.
There was no day,
Nor ever came a night
Setting the stars alight
To wonder at the moon:
Was twilight only and the frightened croon,
Smitten to whimpers, of the dreary wind
And waves that journeyed blind—
And then I loosed my ear . . . O, it was sweet
To hear a cart go jolting down the street.

WHAT THOMAS AN BUILE SAID IN A PUB

I saw God. Do you doubt it?
  Do you dare to doubt it?
I saw the Almighty Man. His hand
Was resting on a mountain, and
He looked upon the World and all about it:
I saw him plainer than you see me now,
  You mustn't doubt it.

He was not satisfied;
  His look was all dissatisfied.
His beard swung on a wind far out of sight
Behind the world's curve, and there was light
Most fearful from His forehead, and He sighed,
"That star went always wrong, and from the start
  I was dissatisfied."

He lifted up His hand—
  I say He heaved a dreadful hand
Over the spinning Earth. Then I said, "Stay,
You must not strike it, God; I'm in the way;
And I will never move from where I stand."
He said, "Dear child, I feared that you were dead,"
  And stayed His hand.

TO THE FOUR COURTS, PLEASE

The driver rubbed at his nettly chin
With a huge, loose forefinger, crooked and black,
And his wobbly, violet lips sucked in,
And puffed out again and hung down slack:
One fang shone through his lop-sided smile,
In his little pouched eye flickered years of guile.

And the horse, poor beast, it was ribbed and forked,
And its ears hung down, and its eyes were old,
And its knees were knuckly, and as we talked
It swung the stiff neck that could scarcely hold
Its big, skinny head up—then I stepped in,
And the driver climbed to his seat with a grin.

God help the horse and the driver too,
And the people and beasts who have never a friend,
For the driver easily might have been you,
And the horse be me by a different end.
And nobody knows how their days will cease,
And the poor, when they're old, have little of peace.

Martin Armstrong

Martin Armstrong was born in 1882 and, besides being a poet, is a short-story writer of uncommon delicacy. His first publication was a volume of verse, *Exodus and other Poems* (1912) which, like the great majority of first offerings, was wholly without distinction. Even *Thirty New Poems,* which followed six years later, in 1918, lacked any dominating quality and it was not until the publication of *The Buzzards and Other Poems* (1921) that Armstrong began to interest his readers.

Although Armstrong has not ceased writing poetry, most of his work since *The Buzzards* has been in prose. *The Puppet Show* (1922) and *The Bazaar* (1924) are collections of short tales; *The Goat and Compasses* (1925) is a novel which has a country pub as its background.

FROST IN LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS

Lifeless, still, in the frosty air
The old stone houses round the square
Look out upon grey lawns whose grass
Is frozen to brittle blades of steel or glass;
And on black beds through whose ice-welded crust,
Hollow and hard, no gardener's spade could thrust;
And on black branches that forget to grow
And hang benumbed and hypnotised as though

The sap stood still. The very air seems dead,
All sound dried out of it. No ringing tread
Warms the numbed silence. Even the sun himself,
An orange disk in a grey frost-laden sky,
Hangs lightless like a plate upon a shelf.

This is not life. Some ghost of otherwhere
Takes shadowy substance from the frozen air
To hover briefly till the spell is broken.
A dream, a passing thought, a faint word spoken!

But suddenly from a corner of the square
A shimmering fount of sound leaps clean and rare,
A small thin frosty cheer like tinkling glass.
Is it the shouts of boys that pass
Running in file to slide on the icy curb,
Or dryads, sick for spring,
Wailing forlornly under the frozen herb?
O Light of Youth, O Flower of Life in Death!
We listen with bated breath.
So sad, so clear the delicate wistful spell!

Till frost lays hold on the sound and all is still.

John Drinkwater

John Drinkwater was born in 1882, was educated at the Oxford High School, and was for a time in various Assurance Offices. His first book, published at the age of 21, was followed by another collection of verse, *The Death of Leander* (1906).

Primarily a poetic dramatist, Drinkwater is best known as the author of *Abraham Lincoln—A Play* (1919) founded on Lord Charnwood's masterly and analytical biography. He has pub-

lished several volumes of poems, most of them meditative and elegiac in mood.

The best of his verses have been collected in *Poems,* 1908-19, and the two here reprinted are used by permission of, and by special arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.

Since this volume of collected earlier poems, Drinkwater has published *Tides* (1917) and *Seeds of Time* (1921).

RECIPROCITY

I do not think that skies and meadows are
Moral, or that the fixture of a star
Comes of a quiet spirit, or that trees
Have wisdom in their windless silences.
Yet these are things invested in my mood
With constancy, and peace, and fortitude,
That in my troubled season I can cry
Upon the wide composure of the sky,
And envy fields, and wish that I might be
As little daunted as a star or tree.

A TOWN WINDOW

Beyond my window in the night
  Is but a drab inglorious street,
Yet there the frost and clean starlight
  As over Warwick woods are sweet.

Under the grey drift of the town
  The crocus works among the mould
As eagerly as those that crown
  The Warwick spring in flame and gold.

And when the tramway down the hill
  Across the cobbles moans and rings,
There is about my window-sill
  The tumult of a thousand wings.

James Joyce

James Joyce was born at Dublin, February 2, 1882, and educated in Ireland. He studied medicine in Paris, where he has lived since early manhood, intended at one time to be a professional singer, and was a teacher in a European Berlitz School for a while.

Joyce is best known as a highly sensitive and strikingly original writer of prose, his most celebrated works being *Dubliners* (1914), the novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and that extraordinary document, *Ulysses* (1922). His one volume of verse, *Chamber Music,* was published in this country in 1918.

"I HEAR AN ARMY"

I hear an army charging upon the land,
  And the thunder of horses plunging, foam about their knees:
Arrogant, in black armour, behind them stand,
  Disdaining the reins, with fluttering whips, the charioteers.

They cry unto the night their battle-name:
  I moan in sleep when I hear afar their whirling laughter.
They cleave the gloom of dreams, a blinding flame,
  Clanging, clanging upon the heart as upon an anvil.

They come shaking in triumph their long, green hair:
  They come out of the sea and run shouting by the shore.
My heart, have you no wisdom thus to despair?
  My love, my love, my love, why have you left me alone?

ALL DAY I HEAR

All day I hear the noise of waters
Making moan,
Sad as the sea-bird is when, going
Forth alone,
He hears the winds cry to the waters'
Monotone.

The grey winds, the cold winds are blowing
Where I go.
I hear the noise of many waters
Far below.
All day, all night, I hear them flowing
To and fro.

J. C. Squire

Jack Collings Squire was born April 2, 1884, at Plymouth, of Devonian ancestry. He was educated at Blundell's and Cambridge University, and became known first as a remarkably adroit parodist. His *Imaginary Speeches* (1912) and *Tricks of the Trade* (1917) are amusing parodies and, what is more, excellent criticism. He edited *The New Statesman* for a while and founded *The London Mercury* (a monthly of which he is editor) in November, 1919. Under the pseudonym "Solomon Eagle" he wrote a page of literary criticism every week for six years, many of these papers being collected in his volume, *Books in General* (1919).

His original poetry is intellectual but simple, occasionally metaphysical and always interesting in its variable rhythms. A collection of his best verse up to 1919 was published under the title, *Poems: First Series.* A subsequent *Poems: Second Series* appeared in 1921. Recently, Squire's labors as anthologist have eclipsed his talents in other fields.

A HOUSE

Now very quietly, and rather mournfully,
  In clouds of hyacinth the sun retires,
And all the stubble-fields that were so warm to him
  Keep but in memory their borrowed fires.

And I, the traveller, break, still unsatisfied,
  From that faint exquisite celestial strand,
And turn and see again the only dwelling-place
  In this wide wilderness of darkening land.

The house, that house, O now what change has come
      to it.
  Its crude red-brick façade, its roof of slate;
What imperceptible swift hand has given it
  A new, a wonderful, a queenly state?

No hand has altered it, that parallelogram,
  So inharmonious, so ill-arranged;
That hard blue roof in shape and colour's what it was;
  No, it is not that any line has changed.

Only that loneliness is now accentuate
  And, as the dusk unveils the heaven's deep cave,
This small world's feebleness fills me with awe again,
  And all man's energies seem very brave.

And this mean edifice, which some dull architect
  Built for an ignorant earth-turning hind,
Takes on the quality of that magnificent
  Unshakable dauntlessness of human kind.

Darkness and stars will come, and long the night
will be,
Yet imperturbable that house will rest,
Avoiding gallantly the stars' chill scrutiny,
Ignoring secrets in the midnight's breast.

Thunders may shudder it, and winds demoniac
May howl their menaces, and hail descend:
Yet it will bear with them, serenely, steadfastly,
Not even scornfully, and wait the end.

And all a universe of nameless messengers
From unknown distances may whisper fear,
And it will imitate immortal permanence,
And stare and stare ahead and scarcely hear.

It stood there yesterday; it will to-morrow, too,
When there is none to watch, no alien eyes
To watch its ugliness assume a majesty
From this great solitude of evening skies.

So lone, so very small, with worlds and worlds around,
While life remains to it prepared to outface
Whatever awful unconjectured mysteries
May hide and wait for it in time and space.

A FRESH MORNING

Now am I a tin whistle
Through which God blows,
And I wish to God I were a trumpet
—But why, God only knows.

Another remarkable poet whose early death was a blow to English literature, James Elroy Flecker, was born in London, November 5, 1884. He studied at Trinity College, Oxford, specialized in Oriental languages at Cambridge, and went to Constantinople in the Consular Service in 1910.

The fact that the remainder of his life was spent in the East has a direct bearing on Flecker's work—his play *Hassan* being the most definite reflection of his adopted Orientalism.

Possibly due to his low vitality, Flecker found little to interest him but a reaction against realism in verse, a delight in verbal craftsmanship, and a passion for technical perfection—especially the deliberate technique of the French Parnassians whom he worshipped. Flecker was opposed to any art that was emotional or that "taught" anything. "The poet's business," he declared, "is not to save the soul of man, but to make it worth saving."

The advent of the war began to make Flecker's verse more personal and romantic. The tuberculosis that finally killed him at Davos Platz, Switzerland, January 3, 1915, forced him from an Olympian disinterest to a deep concern with life and death. He passionately denied that he was weary of living "as the pallid poets are," and he was attempting higher flights of song when his singing ceased altogether. Few lyrics of the period will live longer than the three here reprinted by permission of the executors.

Flecker's two colorful volumes are *The Golden Journey to Samarkand* (1913) and *The Old Ships* (1915). A *Collected Poems,* with an autobiographical introduction and notes by J. C. Squire, was published in 1917.

THE OLD SHIPS

I have seen old ships sail like swans asleep
Beyond the village which men still call Tyre,
With leaden age o'ercargoed, dipping deep
For Famagusta and the hidden sun
That rings black Cyprus with a lake of fire;

And all those ships were certainly so old—
Who knows how oft with squat and noisy gun,
Questing brown slaves or Syrian oranges,
The pirate Genoese
Hell-raked them till they rolled
Blood, water, fruit and corpses up the hold.
But now through friendly seas they softly run,
Painted the mid-sea blue or shore-sea green,
Still patterned with the vine and grapes in gold.

But I have seen,
Pointing her shapely shadows from the dawn
And image tumbled on a rose-swept bay,
A drowsy ship of some yet older day;
And, wonder's breath indrawn,
Thought I—who knows—who knows—but in that same
(Fished up beyond Aeaea, patched up new
—Stern painted brighter blue—)
That talkative, bald-headed seaman came
(Twelve patient comrades sweating at the oar)
From Troy's doom-crimson shore,
And with great lies about his wooden horse
Set the crew laughing, and forgot his course.

It was so old a ship—who knows, who knows?
—And yet so beautiful, I watched in vain
To see the mast burst open with a rose,
And the whole deck put on its leaves again.

STILLNESS

When the words rustle no more,
  And the last work's done,
When the bolt lies deep in the door,
  And Fire, our Sun,
Falls on the dark-laned meadows of the floor;

When from the clock's last chime to the next chime
  Silence beats his drum,
And Space with gaunt grey eyes and her brother Time
  Wheeling and whispering come,
She with the mould of form and he with the loom of
    rhyme:

Then twittering out in the night my thought-birds flee,
  I am emptied of all my dreams:
I only hear Earth turning, only see
  Ether's long bankless streams,
And only know I should drown if you
  Laid not your hand on me.

THE WAR SONG OF THE SARACENS

We are they who come faster than fate: we are they who
    ride early or late:
We storm at your ivory gate: Pale Kings of the Sunset,
    beware!
Not on silk nor in samet we lie, not in curtained solemnity
    die
Among women who chatter and cry, and children who
    mumble a prayer.

But we sleep by the ropes of the camp, and we rise with a shout, and we tramp
With the sun or the moon for a lamp, and the spray of the wind in our hair.

From the lands, where the elephants are, to the forts of Merou and Balghar,
Our steel we have brought and our star to shine on the ruins of Ruhm.
We have marched from the Indus to Spain, and, by God, we will go there again;
We have stood on the shore of the plain where the Waters of Destiny boom.
A mart of destruction we made at Jalúla where men were afraid,
For death was a difficult trade, and the sword was a broker of doom;

And the Spear was a Desert Physician who cured not a few of ambition,
And drave not a few to perdition with medicine bitter and strong;
And the shield was a grief to the fool and as bright as a desolate pool,
And as straight as the rock of Stamboul when their cavalry thundered along:
For the coward was drowned with the brave when our battle sheered up like a wave,
And the dead to the desert we gave, and the glory to God in our song.

Anna Wickham was born in Wimbledon, Surrey, in 1884. She went to Australia at six, returned when she was twenty-one, studied for Opera in Paris with De Reszke and suddenly, after a few years of marriage, became a poet. In a burst of creative energy she wrote nine hundred poems in four years.

Her two first books were republished in America in one volume, *The Contemplative Quarry* (1921). This was followed a little later by *The Little Old House.* Another volume, *The Noiseless Propeller,* is in preparation. The most casual reading of Anna Wickham's work reveals the strength of her candor. The poems could scarcely be put in the category of "charming" verse; they are astringent and sometimes harsh; gnarled frequently by their own changes of mood. Her lines present the picture of woman struggling between dreams and domesticity; they are acutely sensitive, restless, analytical. The very tone of her poetry reflects the disturbed music and the nervous protests of her age.

Although Mrs. Wickham has written many longer poems, her terse, pungently flavored lyrics are most characteristic of her. She is a psychologist by intention, but a psychologist who has not forgotten how to sing. A master of brusque epigram, Mrs. Wickham's intensity is as wayward as it is subtle.

DOMESTIC ECONOMY

I will have few cooking-pots,
They shall be bright;
They shall reflect to blinding
God's straight light.
I will have four garments,
They shall be clean;
My service shall be good,
Though my diet be mean.
Then I shall have excess to give to the poor,
And right to counsel beggars at my door.

CREATRIX

Let us thank Almighty God
For the woman with the rod.
Who was ever and is now
Strong, essential as the plough.
She shall goad and she shall drive,
So to keep man's soul alive.
Amoris with her scented dress
Beckons, in pretty wantonness;
But the wife drives, nor can man tell
What hands so urge, what powers compel.

SONG

I was so chill, and overworn, and sad,
To be a lady was the only joy I had.
I walked the street as silent as a mouse,
Buying fine clothes, and fittings for the house.

But since I saw my love
I wear a simple dress,
And happily I move
Forgetting weariness.

SELF-ANALYSIS

The tumult of my fretted mind
Gives me expression of a kind;
But it is faulty, harsh, not plain—
My work has the incompetence of pain.

I am consumed with a slow fire,
For righteousness is my desire;
Towards that good goal I cannot whip my will,
I am a tired horse that jibs upon a hill.

I desire Virtue, though I love her not—
I have no faith in her when she is got:
I fear that she will bind and make me slave
And send me songless to the sullen grave.

I am like a man who fears to take a wife,
And frets his soul with wantons all his life.
With rich, unholy foods I stuff my maw;
When I am sick, then I believe in law.

I fear the whiteness of straight ways—
I think there is no colour in unsullied days.
My silly sins I take for my heart's ease,
And know my beauty in the end disease.

Of old there were great heroes, strong in fight,
Who, tense and sinless, kept a fire alight:
God of our hope, in their great name,
Give me the straight and ordered flame!

SEHNSUCHT[1]

Because of body's hunger are we born,
And by contriving hunger are we fed;
Because of hunger is our work well done,
As so are songs well sung, and things well said.
Desire and longing are the whips of God—
God save us all from death when we are fed.

[1] *Sehnsucht:* Longing.

ENVOI

God, thou great symmetry,
Who put a biting lust in me
From whence my sorrows spring,
For all the frittered days
That I have spent in shapeless ways,
Give me one perfect thing.

D. H. Lawrence

David Herbert Lawrence, born in 1885, is one of the most psychologically intense of the modern poets. This intensity, ranging from a febrile morbidity to an exalted and almost frenzied mysticism, is seen in its highest colors in his prose works—particularly in such short stories as *The Prussian Officer* (1917), *The Captain's Doll* (1923), the analytical *Sons and Lovers* (1913), and the rhapsodic novel, *The Rainbow* (1915).

As a poet he is often caught in the net of his own emotions; his passion thickens his utterance and distorts his rhythms, which sometimes seem purposely harsh and bitter-flavored. But, within his range, he is as powerful as he is poignant. His most notable volumes of poetry are *Amores* (1916), *Look! We Have Come Through!* (1918), *New Poems* (1920), and *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* (1923).

Lately, Lawrence has become energetic in practically every branch of literature. As essayist, he has published an extremely belligerent book on "Classic American Literature"; as translator, he has adapted volumes from the Italian; and as emotional philosopher, he has contributed three books to the study of psychoanalysis. And he is a poet in all his manifestations.

PIANO

Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the tingling strings
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song
Betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter outside
And hymns in the cosy parlour, the tinkling piano our guide.

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamour
With the great black piano appassionato. The glamour
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the past.

COMING AWAKE

When I woke, the lake-lights were quivering on the wall,
The sunshine swam in a shoal across and across,
And a hairy, big bee hung over the primulas
In the window, his body black fur, and the sound of him cross.

There was something I ought to remember: and yet
I did not remember. Why should I? The running lights
And the airy primulas, oblivious
Of the impending bee—they were fair enough sights.

FLAT SUBURBS IN THE MORNING

The new red houses spring like plants
In level rows
Of reddish herbage that bristles and slants
Its square shadows.

The pink young houses show one side bright
Flatly assuming the sun,
And one side shadow, half in sight,
Half-hiding the pavement-run;

Where hastening creatures pass intent
On their level way,
Threading like ants that can never relent
And have nothing to say.

Bare stems of street-lamps stiffly stand
At random, desolate twigs,
To testify to a blight on the land
That has stripped their sprigs.

LISTENING

I listen to the silence of you,
My dear, among it all;
I feel your silence touch my words as I talk,
And hold them in thrall.

My words fly off a forge
The length of a spark;
I see the night-sky easily sip them
Into the dark.

The lark sings loud and glad,
  Yet I am not loth
That silence should take the song and the bird
  And lose them both.

A train goes roaring south,
  The steam-flag flowing;
I see the stealthy shadow of silence
  Alongside going.

And off the forge of the world,
  Whirling in the draught of life,
Go sparks of myriad people, filling
  The night with strife.

Yet they never change the darkness
  Or blench it with noise;
Alone on the perfect silence
  The stars are buoys.

GREEN

The dawn was apple-green,
The sky was green wine held up in the sun,
The moon was a golden petal between.

She opened her eyes, and green
They shone, clear like flowers undone
For the first time, now for the first time seen.

Francis Brett Young was born in 1885. A novelist as well as a poet, he has been called, by *The Manchester Guardian,* "one of the promising evangelists of contemporary poetry," and written much that is both graceful and spirited. There is music and a message in his lines which seem to have as their motto: "Trust in the true and fiery spirit of Man." Best known as a writer of prose, his most prominent works are *Marching on Tanga* and *The Crescent Moon.*

Brett Young's *Five Degrees South* (1917) and his *Poems 1916-18* (1919) contain the best of his verse.

LOCHANILAUN

This is the image of my last content:
My soul shall be a little lonely lake,
So hidden that no shadow of man may break
The folding of its mountain battlement;
Only the beautiful and innocent
Whiteness of sea-born cloud drooping to shake
Cool rain upon the reed-beds, or the wake
Of churned cloud in a howling wind's descent.
For there shall be no terror in the night
When stars that I have loved are born in me,
And cloudy darkness I will hold most fair;
But this shall be the end of my delight:—
That you, my lovely one, may stoop and see
Your image in the mirrored beauty there.

F. S. Flint

Known chiefly as an authority on modern French poetry, F. S. Flint, born in 1885, has published several volumes of original imagist poems, besides having translated works of Verhaeren and Jean de Bosschere.

In the Net of Stars (1909) was Flint's first volume; his most recent publication is *Otherworld* (1920).

LONDON

London, my beautiful,
it is not the sunset
nor the pale green sky
shimmering through the curtain
of the silver birch,
nor the quietness;
it is not the hopping
of birds
upon the lawn,
nor the darkness
stealing over all things
that moves me.

But as the moon creeps slowly
over the tree-tops
among the stars,
I think of her
and the glow her passing
sheds on men.

London, my beautiful,
I will climb
into the branches
to the moonlit tree-tops,
that my blood may be cooled
by the wind.

Gerald Gould was born in 1885 at Scarborough, was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, and was Fellow of Merton College from 1906 to 1916. He is a journalist as well as author and was associate editor of *The Daily Herald* from 1919 to 1923.

Among his several volumes, the most distinctive are *The Happy Tree* (1919) and *The Journey* (1920). Although extremely versatile, his smoothly running lines rarely descend to mere facility; a dignity of spirit underlies even the least pretentious of Gould's lyrics.

SONG

She whom I love will sit apart,
  And they whom love makes wise
May know the beauty in her heart
  By the beauty in her eyes.

Thoughts that in quietness confute
  The noisy world are hers,
Like music in a listening lute
  Whose strings no finger stirs.

And in her eyes the shadows move,
  Not glad nor sad, but strange
With those unchanging dreams that prove
  The littleness of change.

THE LITTLE THINGS

The little things, the little restless things,
The base and barren things, the things that spite
The day, and trail processions through the night
Of sad remembrances and questionings;

The poverties, stupidities and stings,
The silted misery, the hovering blight;
The things that block the paths of sound and sight;
The things that snare one's thought and break its wings—

How shall we bear these?—we who suffer so
The shattering sacrifice, the huge despair,
The terrors loosed like lightnings on the air,
To leave all nature blackened from that curse!
The big things are the enemies we know,
The little things the traitors. Which are worse?

Humbert Wolfe

Humbert Wolfe was born at Milan in Italy, January 5, 1885. As he himself declared, he "lost no time in crossing to Bradford in the West Riding of Yorkshire, which town he reached during the same year and remained there till he left it for Oxford some 18 years later. Wrote sporadic and increasingly unsatisfactory verse from the age of 16 till his appointment to the British Civil Service in 1909. This appointment naturally induced in him a more restrained outlook upon life and, beyond a few casual poems and a rejected novel, he had no literary output or recognition till after the War in 1919. In that year, he published *London Sonnets,* followed in the next year by *Shylock Reasons with Mr. Chesterton.* In 1923, he published *Circular Saws,* a collection of ambiguous aphorisms, and, in 1924, *Kensington Gardens,* a collection of short poems dealing with that delectable locality. It is to be anticipated (and feared) that his output will tend rapidly to increase."

Thus far, Mr. Wolfe. At this point, the editor resumes his task and adds that Humbert Wolfe is, in whatever medium he selects, a distinct and distinguished personality. His prose is keen with so fine an edge that the reader is scarcely aware of the author's dexterous incisions. Wolfe's poetry is of two kinds—grave and charming. Sometimes the two qualities are

mingled, although the tenderly whimsical note dominates in *Kensington Gardens*. The more recent poems reveal the larger Wolfe—one of the most skilful, sensitive artists of his day; a poet who, for all the attention given to his experiments in rhyme and verbal colour, has barely begun to receive the recognition which is his due. *The Unknown Goddess* (1925) sounds depths with ease and clarity.

TULIP

Clean as a lady,
cool as glass,
fresh without fragrance
the tulip was.

The craftsman, who carved her
of metal, prayed:
"Live, oh thou lovely!"
Half metal she stayed.

THRUSHES

The City Financier
walks in the gardens,
stiffly, because of
his pride and his burdens.

The daisies, looking
up, observe
only a self-
respecting curve.

The thrushes only
see a flat
table-land
of shiny hat.

He looks importantly
about him,
while all the spring
goes on without him.

THE GREY SQUIRREL

Like a small grey
coffee-pot,
sits the squirrel.
He is not

all he should be,
kills by dozens
trees, and eats
his red-brown cousins.

The keeper, on the
other hand
, who shot him, is
a Christian, and

loves his enemies,
which shows
the squirrel was not
one of those.

LAMB

The old bellwether
looked at the lamb,
as a gentleman looks
when he mutters "Damn!"

"If you jump and frisk,
you little fool,
you'll only end
by losing your wool.

"When I was a lamb
I always would
behave as like a sheep
as I could."

"Did you!" the lamb
replied with a leap,
"I always thought
You were born a sheep."

The park-keeper said
to the boy on the fence
"Let's have less
of your impudence!

"Off with you now,
and do as you're bade,
or you'll end in prison.
When I was a lad . . ."

GREEN CANDLES

"There's someone at the door," said gold candlestick:
"Let her in quick, let her in quick!"
"There is a small hand groping at the handle.
Why don't you turn it?" asked green candle.

"Don't go, don't go," said the Heppelwhite chair,
"Lest you find a strange lady there."
"Yes, stay where you are," whispered the white wall:
"There is nobody there at all."

"I know her little foot," grey carpet said:
"Who but I should know her light tread?"
"She shall come in," answered the open door,
"And not," said the room, "go out any more."

ILIAD

False dreams, all false,
mad heart, were yours.
The word, and nought else,
in time endures.
Not you long after,
perished and mute,
will last, but the defter
viol and lute.
Sweetly they'll trouble
the listeners
with the cold dropped pebble
of painless verse.
Not you will be offered,
but the poet's false pain.
You have loved and suffered,
mad heart, in vain.
What love doth Helen
or Paris have
where they lie still in
a nameless grave?
Her beauty's a wraith,

and the boy Paris
muffles in death
his mouth's cold cherries.
Yes! these are less,
that were love's summer,
than one gold phrase
of old blind Homer.
Not Helen's wonder
nor Paris stirs,
but the bright, untender
hexameters.
And thus, all passion
is nothing made,
but a star to flash in
an Iliad.
Mad heart, you were wrong!
No love of yours,
but only what's sung,
when love's over, endures.

Shane Leslie

Shane Leslie, the only surviving son of Sir John Leslie, was born at Swan Park, Monaghan, Ireland, in 1886, and was educated at Eton, the University of Paris and King's College, Cambridge. He worked for a time among the Irish poor and was deeply interested in the Celtic revival. During the greater part of a year he lectured in the United States, marrying an American, Marjorie Ide.

Leslie has been editor of *The Dublin Review* since 1916. He is the author of several volumes on Irish political matters, as well as *The End of a Chapter* (revised in 1917) and *Verses in Peace and War* (1916). The chief characteristics of his verse are an imaginative sweep and (as in "The Pater of the Cannon") a grimly ironic twist.

FLEET STREET

I never see the newsboys run
  Amid the whirling street,
  With swift untiring feet,
To cry the latest venture done,
But I expect one day to hear
  Them cry the crack of doom
  And risings from the tomb,
With great Archangel Michael near;
And see them running from the Fleet
  As messengers of God,
  With Heaven's tidings shod
About their brave unwearied feet.

THE PATER OF THE CANNON

Father of the thunder,
  Flinger of the flame,
Searing stars asunder,
  Hallowed be Thy Name!

By the sweet-sung quiring
  Sister bullets hum,
By our fiercest firing,
  May Thy Kingdom come!

By Thy strong apostle
  Of the Maxim gun,
By his pentecostal
  Flame, *Thy Will be done!*

Give us, Lord, good feeding
To Thy battles sped—
Flesh, white grained and bleeding,
Give for daily bread!

Frances Cornford

Frances (Darwin) Cornford, daughter of Sir Francis Darwin, the third son of Charles Darwin, was born in 1886 at Cambridge. She married Francis Macdonald Cornford, Fellow and Lecturer of Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1909.

Her first volume, though unaffected, showed little trace of individuality. With *Spring Morning* (1915) a much more distinct personality expressed itself. Hers is a firmly realised, clean-edged verse; a clarity of utterance which is also found in the more recent *Autumn Midnight* (1923).

PREËXISTENCE

I laid me down upon the shore
And dreamed a little space;
I heard the great waves break and roar;
The sun was on my face.

My idle hands and fingers brown
Played with the pebbles grey;
The waves came up, the waves went down,
Most thundering and gay.

The pebbles, they were smooth and round
And warm upon my hands,
Like little people I had found
Sitting among the sands.

The grains of sand so shining-small
  Soft through my fingers ran;
The sun shone down upon it all,
  And so my dream began:

How all of this had been before;
  How ages far away
I lay on some forgotten shore
  As here I lie to-day.

The waves came shining up the sands,
  As here to-day they shine;
And in my pre-pelasgian hands
  The sand was warm and fine.

I have forgotten whence I came,
  Or what my home might be,
Or by what strange and savage name
  I called that thundering sea.

I only know the sun shone down
  As still it shines to-day,
And in my fingers long and brown
  The little pebbles lay.

THE HILLS

Out of the complicated house, come I
To walk beneath the sky.
Here mud and stones and turf, here everything
Is mutely comforting.
Now hung upon the twigs and thorns appear
A host of lovely rain-drops cold and clear.

And on the bank
Or deep in brambly hedges dank
The small birds nip about, and say:
"Brothers, the Spring is not so far away!"
The hills like mother-giantesses old
Lie in the cold,
And with a complete patience, let
The cows come cropping on their bosoms wet,
And even tolerate that such as I
Should wander by
With paltry leathern heel which cannot harm
Their bodies calm;
And, with a heart they cannot know, to bless
The enormous power of their peacefulness.

Siegfried Sassoon

Siegfried (Lorraine) Sassoon, the poet whom Masefield hailed as "one of England's most brilliant rising stars," was born September 8, 1886. He was educated at Marlborough and Clare College, Cambridge, and was a captain in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. He fought three times in France, once in Palestine, winning the Military Cross for bringing in wounded on the battlefield.

His poetry divides itself sharply in two moods—the lyric and the ironic. His early lilting poems were without significance or individuality. But with *The Old Huntsman* (1917) Sassoon found his own idiom, taking his place as one of the leading younger poets upon the appearance of this striking volume. The first poem, a long monologue evidently inspired by Masefield, gave little evidence of what was to come. Immediately following it, however, came a series of war poems, undisguised in their tragedy and bitterness. Every line of these quivering stanzas bore the mark of a sensitive and outraged nature; there was scarcely a phrase that did not protest against the "glorification" and false glamour of war.

Counter-Attack appeared in 1918. In this volume, Sassoon turned entirely from an ordered loveliness to the gigantic brutality of war. At heart a lyric idealist, the bloody years intensified and twisted his tenderness till what was stubborn and satiric in him forced its way to the top. In *Counter-Attack* Sassoon found his angry outlet. Most of these poems are choked with passion; many of them are torn out, roots and all, from the very core of an intense conviction; they rush on, not so much because of the poet's art but almost in spite of it. A suave utterance, a neatly-joined structure would be out of place and even inexcusable in poems like "The Rear-Guard," "To Any Dead Officer," "Does It Matter?"—verses that are composed of love, fever and indignation.

Can Sassoon see nothing glorious or uplifting in war? His friend, Robert Nichols, another poet and soldier, speaks for him in a preface. "Let no one ever," Nichols quotes Sassoon as saying, "from henceforth say one word in any way countenancing war. It is dangerous even to speak of how here and there the individual may gain some hardship of soul by it. For war is hell, and those who institute it are criminals. Were there even anything to say for it, it should not be said; for its spiritual disasters far outweigh any of its advantages. . . ." Nichols adds his approval to these sentences, saying, "For myself, this is the truth. War does not ennoble, it degrades."

Early in 1920, Sassoon visited America. At the same time, he brought out his *Picture Show* (1920), a vigorous answer to those who feared that Sassoon had "written himself out" or had begun to burn away in his own fire. Had Rupert Brooke lived, he might have written many of these lacerated but somehow exalted lines. "The Dug-Out" and "Everyone Sang" are splendid examples of how much poignance and (in the latter) winged joy can be held in less than a dozen lines. Sassoon's three volumes are the most vital and unsparing records of the war we have had. They synthesize in poetry what Barbusse's *Under Fire* spreads out in panoramic prose.

Recreations, a privately distributed volume, printed at Christmas, 1923, for his friends, shows Sassoon in a more playfully intellectual vein. Less direct than his deeper notes, these fifteen poems display another highly interesting though less emotional side of Sassoon's genius.

DREAMERS

Soldiers are citizens of death's gray land,
  Drawing no dividend from time's to-morrows.
In the great hour of destiny they stand,
  Each with his feuds, and jealousies, and sorrows.
Soldiers are sworn to action; they must win
  Some flaming, fatal climax with their lives.
Soldiers are dreamers; when the guns begin
  They think of firelit homes, clean beds, and wives.

I see them in foul dug-outs, gnawed by rats,
  And in the ruined trenches, lashed with rain,
Dreaming of things they did with balls and bats,
  And mocked by hopeless longing to regain
Bank-holidays, and picture shows, and spats,
  And going to the office in the train.

THE REAR-GUARD

Groping along the tunnel, step by step,
He winked his prying torch with patching glare
From side to side, and sniffed the unwholesome air.

Tins, boxes, bottles, shapes too vague to know,
A mirror smashed, the mattress from a bed;
And he, exploring fifty feet below
The rosy gloom of battle overhead.
Tripping, he grabbed the wall; saw someone lie
Humped at his feet, half-hidden by a rug,
And stooped to give the sleeper's arm a tug.
"I'm looking for headquarters." No reply.

"God blast your neck!" (For days he'd had no sleep.)
"Get up and guide me through this stinking place."
Savage, he kicked a soft, unanswering heap,
And flashed his beam across the livid face
Terribly glaring up, whose eyes yet wore
Agony dying hard ten days before;
And fists of fingers clutched a blackening wound.
Alone he staggered on until he found
Dawn's ghost that filtered down a shafted stair
To the dazed, muttering creatures underground
Who hear the boom of shells in muffled sound.
At last, with sweat of horror in his hair,
He climbed through darkness to the twilight air,
Unloading hell behind him step by step.

THE DUG-OUT

Why do you lie with your legs ungainly huddled,
And one arm bent across your sullen, cold,
Exhausted face? It hurts my heart to watch you,
Deep-shadowed from the candle's guttering gold;
And you wonder why I shake you by the shoulder;
Drowsy, you mumble and sigh and turn your head. . . .
You are too young to fall asleep for ever;
And when you sleep you remind me of the dead.

AFTERMATH

Have you forgotten yet? . . .
For the world's events have rumbled on since those gagged
days,
Like traffic checked a while at the crossing of city ways:

And the haunted gap in your mind has filled with thoughts
that flow
Like clouds in the lit heavens of life; and you're a man
reprieved to go,
Taking your peaceful share of Time, with joy to spare.
*But the past is just the same,—and War's a bloody
game. . . .*
Have you forgotten yet? . . .
*Look down, and swear by the slain of the War that you'll
never forget.*

Do you remember the dark months you held the sector at
Mametz,—
The nights you watched and wired and dug and piled
sandbags on parapets?
Do you remember the rats; and the stench
Of corpses rotting in front of the front-line trench,—
And dawn coming, dirty-white, and chill with a hopeless
rain?
Do you ever stop and ask, "Is it all going to happen
again?"

Do you remember that hour of din before the attack,—
And the anger, the blind compassion that seized and shook
you then
As you peered at the doomed and haggard faces of your
men?
Do you remember the stretcher-cases lurching back
With dying eyes and lolling heads, those ashen-grey
Masks of the lads who once were keen and kind and gay?

Have you forgotten yet? . . .
*Look up, and swear by the green of the Spring that you'll
never forget!*

EVERYONE SANG

Everyone suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark green fields; on; on;
    and out of sight.

Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted,
And beauty came like the setting sun.
My heart was shaken with tears, and horror
Drifted away. . . . O, but every one
Was a bird; and the song was wordless; the
    singing will never be done.

FALLING ASLEEP

Voices moving about in the quiet house:
Thud of feet and a muffled shutting of doors:
Everyone yawning. Only the clocks are alert.

Out in the night there's autumn-smelling gloom
Crowded with whispering trees; across the park
A hollow cry of hounds like lonely bells:
And I know that the clouds are moving across the moon;
The low, red, rising moon. Now herons call
And wrangle by their pool; and hooting owls
Sail from the wood above pale stooks of oats.

Waiting for sleep, I drift from thoughts like these;
And where to-day was dream-like, build my dreams.

Music . . . there was a bright white room below,
And someone singing a song about a soldier,
One hour, two hours ago: and soon the song
Will be *"last night":* but now the beauty swings
Across my brain, ghost of remembered chords
Which still can make such radiance in my dream
That I can watch the marching of my soldiers,
And count their faces; faces; sunlit faces.

Falling asleep . . . the herons, and the hounds. . . .
September in the darkness; and the world
I've known; all fading past me into peace.

Rupert Brooke

Possibly the most famous of the Georgians, Rupert Brooke, was born at Rugby August 3, 1887, his father being assistant master at the school. As a youth, Brooke was keenly interested in all forms of athletics, playing cricket, football, tennis, and swimming as well as most professionals. He was six feet tall, his finely molded head topped with a crown of loose hair of lively brown: "a golden young Apollo," said Edward Thomas. Another friend of his wrote, "To look at, he was part of the youth of the world. He was one of the handsomest Englishmen of his time." His beauty overstressed somewhat his naturally romantic disposition; his early poems are a blend of delight in the splendor of actuality and disillusion in a loveliness that dies. The shadow of John Donne lies over many of his early and more than a few of his later pages.

The bored elegance, the occasional cynicisms, were purged, when after several years of travel (he had been to Germany, Italy and Honolulu) the war came, turning Brooke away from

> "A world grown old and cold and weary . . .
> And half men, and their dirty songs and dreary,
> And all the little emptiness of love."

Brooke enlisted with a relief that was like a rebirth; he sought a new energy in the struggle "where the worst friend and enemy is but Death." After seeing service in Belgium, 1914, he spent the following winter in a training-camp in Dorsetshire and sailed with the British Mediterranean Expeditionary Force in February, 1915, to take part in the unfortunate Dardenelles Campaign.

Brooke never reached his destination. He died of blood-poison at Skyros, in the Ægean, April 23, 1915. His early death was one of England's great literary losses; Lascelles Abercrombie, W. W. Gibson (with both of whom he had been associated on the quarterly, *New Numbers*), Walter De la Mare, the Hon. Winston Spencer Churchill, and a host of others united to pay tribute to the most brilliant and passionate of the younger poets.

Brooke's sonnet-sequence, *1914* (from which "The Soldier" is taken), which, with prophetic irony, appeared a few weeks before his death, contains the accents of immortality. And "The Old Vicarage, Grantchester" (unfortunately too long to reprint in this volume), is fully as characteristic of the lighter and more playful side of Brooke's temperament. Both these phases are combined in "The Great Lover," of which Abercrombie has written, "It is life he loves, and not in any abstract sense, but all the infinite little familiar details of life, remembered and catalogued with delightful zest."

Brooke published only two volumes during his lifetime. After his death, both volumes, with several posthumous poems, were issued as *Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke,* with a Memoir, in 1915. With a few exceptions, when Brooke yielded to the merely clever, all his poetry is alert with the sparkle of his personality. It is the self-aware, self-examining mind that rules his emotions; his verse is a triumph of the intellectual imagination. "The theme of his poetry," says Walter De la Mare, "is the life of the mind, the senses, the feelings—life here and now. . . . His world stands out sharp and distinct, like the towers and pinnacles of a city under the light of a sunny sky." Brooke's delight was not in the shadows of revery and meditation, but in the swift play of ideas, in bright-colored realities, in energetic action and reaction.

THE GREAT LOVER[1]

I have been so great a lover: filled my days
So proudly with the splendour of Love's praise,
The pain, the calm, and the astonishment,
Desire illimitable, and still content,
And all dear names men use, to cheat despair,
For the perplexed and viewless streams that bear
Our hearts at random down the dark of life.
Now, ere the unthinking silence on that strife
Steals down, I would cheat drowsy Death so far,
My night shall be remembered for a star
That outshone all the suns of all men's days.
Shall I not crown them with immortal praise
Whom I have loved, who have given me, dared with me
High secrets, and in darkness knelt to see
The inenarrable godhead of delight?
Love is a flame;—we have beaconed the world's night.
A city:—and we have built it, these and I.
An emperor:—we have taught the world to die.
So, for their sakes I loved, ere I go hence,
And the high cause of Love's magnificence,
And to keep loyalties young, I'll write those names
Golden for ever, eagles, crying flames,
And set them as a banner, that men may know,
To dare the generations, burn, and blow
Out on the wind of Time, shining and streaming. . . .

These I have loved:
White plates and cups, clean-gleaming,

[1] From *The Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke.* Copyright by Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc., and reprinted by permission.

Ringed with blue lines; and feathery, faëry dust;
Wet roofs, beneath the lamp-light; the strong crust
Of friendly bread; and many-tasting food;
Rainbows; and the blue bitter smoke of wood;
And radiant raindrops couching in cool flowers;
And flowers themselves, that sway through sunny hours,
Dreaming of moths that drink them under the moon;
Then, the cool kindliness of sheets, that soon
Smooth away trouble; and the rough male kiss
Of blankets; grainy wood; live hair that is
Shining and free; blue-massing clouds; the keen
Unpassioned beauty of a great machine;
The benison of hot water; furs to touch;
The good smell of old clothes; and other such—
The comfortable smell of friendly fingers,
Hair's fragrance, and the musty reek that lingers
About dead leaves and last year's ferns. . . .
Dear names,
And thousand others throng to me! Royal flames;
Sweet water's dimpling laugh from tap or spring;
Holes in the ground; and voices that do sing:
Voices in laughter, too; and body's pain,
Soon turned to peace; and the deep-panting train;
Firm sands; the little dulling edge of foam
That browns and dwindles as the wave goes home;
And washen stones, gay for an hour; the cold
Graveness of iron; moist black earthen mould;
Sleep; and high places; footprints in the dew;
And oaks; and brown horse-chestnuts, glossy-new;
And new-peeled sticks; and shining pools on grass;—
All these have been my loves. And these shall pass.
Whatever passes not, in the great hour,
Nor all my passion, all my prayers, have power
To hold them with me through the gate of Death.

They'll play deserter, turn with the traitor breath,
Break the high bond we made, and sell Love's trust
And sacramented covenant to the dust.
—Oh, never a doubt but, somewhere, I shall wake,
And give what's left of love again, and make
New friends, now strangers. . . .
But the best I've known
Stays here, and changes, breaks, grows old, is blown
About the winds of the world, and fades from brains
Of living men, and dies.
Nothing remains.

O dear my loves, O faithless, once again
This one last gift I give: that after men
Shall know, and later lovers, far-removed
Praise you, "All these were lovely"; say, "He loved."

THE HILL[1]

Breathless, we flung us on the windy hill,
Laughed in the sun, and kissed the lovely grass.
You said, "Through glory and ecstasy we pass;
Wind, sun, and earth remain, the birds sing still,
When we are old, are old. . . ." "And when we die
All's over that is ours; and life burns on
Through other lovers, other lips," said I,
"Heart of my heart, our heaven is now, is won!"
"We are Earth's best, that learnt her lesson here
Life is our cry. We have kept the faith!" we said;

[1] From *The Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke.* Copyright by Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc., and reprinted by permission.

"We shall go down with unreluctant tread
Rose-crowned into the darkness! . . ." Proud we were,
And laughed, that had such brave true things to say.
And then you suddenly cried, and turned away.

DUST [1]

When the white flame in us is gone,
  And we that lost the world's delight
Stiffen in darkness, left alone
  To crumble in our separate night;

When your swift hair is quiet in death,
  And through the lips corruption thrust
Has stilled the labour of my breath—
  When we are dust, when we are dust!—

Not dead, not undesirous yet,
  Still sentient, still unsatisfied,
We'll ride the air, and shine and flit,
  Around the places where we died,

And dance as dust before the sun,
  And light of foot, and unconfined,
Hurry from road to road, and run
  About the errands of the wind.

And every mote, on earth or air,
  Will speed and gleam down later days,
And like a secret pilgrim fare
  By eager and invisible ways,

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Nor ever rest, nor ever lie,
  Till, beyond thinking, out of view,
One mote of all the dust that's I
  Shall meet one atom that was you.

Then in some garden hushed from wind,
  Warm in a sunset's afterglow,
The lovers in the flowers will find
  A sweet and strange unquiet grow

Upon the peace; and, past desiring,
  So high a beauty in the air,
And such a light, and such a quiring,
  And such a radiant ecstasy there,

They'll know not if it's fire, or dew,
  Or out of earth, or in the height,
Singing, or flame, or scent, or hue,
  Or two that pass, in light, to light,

Out of the garden higher, higher . . .
  But in that instant they shall learn
The shattering fury of our fire,
  And the weak passionless hearts will burn

And faint in that amazing glow,
  Until the darkness close above;
And they will know—poor fools, they'll
      know!—
  One moment, what it is to love.

THE SOLDIER[1]

If I should die, think only this of me;
  That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
  In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
  Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's breathing English air,
  Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
  A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
    Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England
      given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
  And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
    In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Winifred M. Letts

Winifred M. Letts was born in Ireland and her early work concerned itself almost entirely with the humor and pathos found in her immediate surroundings. Her *Songs from Leinster* (1913) is her most characteristic collection; a volume full of the poetry of simple people and humble souls. Although she has called herself "a back-door sort of bard," she is particularly effective in the old ballad measure and in her quaint portrayal of Irish peasants rather than of Gaelic kings and pagan heroes. She has also written three novels, five books for children, two plays produced at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin and a later volume of verse, *Hallow E'en* (1916).

[1] From *The Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke.* Copyright by Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc., and reprinted by permission.

GRANDEUR

Poor Mary Byrne is dead,
  An' all the world may see
Where she lies upon her bed
  Just as fine as quality.

She lies there still and white,
  With candles either hand
That'll guard her through the night:
  Sure she never was so grand.

She holds her rosary,
  Her hands clasped on her breast.
Just as dacint as can be
  In the habit she's been dressed.

In life her hands were red
  With every sort of toil,
But they're white now she is dead,
  An' they've sorra mark of soil.

The neighbours come and go,
  They kneel to say a prayer,
I wish herself could know
  Of the way she's lyin' there.

It was work from morn till night,
  And hard she earned her bread:
But I'm thinking she's a right
  To be aisy now she's dead.

When other girls were gay,
  At wedding or at fair,
She'd be toiling all the day,
  Not a minyit could she spare.

An' no one missed her face,
  Or sought her in a crowd,
But to-day they throng the place
  Just to see her in her shroud.

The creature in her life
  Drew trouble with each breath;
She was just "poor Jim Byrne's wife"—
  But she's lovely in her death.

I wish the dead could see
  The splendour of a wake,
For it's proud herself would be
  Of the keening that they make.

Och! little Mary Byrne,
  You welcome every guest,
Is it now you take your turn
  To be merry with the rest?

I'm thinking you'd be glad,
  Though the angels make your bed,
Could you see the care we've had
  To respect you—now you're dead.

Joseph (Mary) Plunkett was born in Ireland in 1887 and devoted himself to the cause that has compelled so many martyrs. He gave all his hours and finally his life in an effort to establish the freedom of his country. He was one of the leaders of that group of Nationalists which included MacDonagh and Padraic Pearse. (See page 189.) Had he been allowed to develop his gifts as singer, there is no doubt that he would have added a lustre to the roll of Irish poets. Even the two brief lyrics reprinted here show (*vide* "Poppies" in particular) that Plunkett possessed a subtle craftsmanship to express his tender mysticism.

After the Easter Week uprising in Dublin in 1916, Plunkett and his compatriots were arrested by the British Government and executed.

I SEE HIS BLOOD UPON THE ROSE

I see His blood upon the rose
And in the stars the glory of His eyes,
His body gleams amid eternal snows,
His tears fall from the skies.

I see His face in every flower;
The thunder and the singing of the birds
Are but His voice—and carven by His power,
Rocks are His written words.

All pathways by His feet are worn,
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea,
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn,
His cross is every tree.

POPPIES

O Sower of sorrow,
From the seed of your sowing
To-morrow the mower
The wheat will be mowing.

O Reaper of ruth,
Mid the roots of your reaping
Springs the truth that in sleep
Bears the fruit of all sleeping.

O Binder of sheaves
That are loose for your binding,
Withered leaves you shall find
And shall lose after finding.

Edwin Muir

Edwin Muir was born in Deerness, in the Orkney Islands, in 1887. He had practically no schooling in boyhood and none whatever after his fourteenth year, when his family moved to Glasgow and young Muir started work as a clerk. Although he is best known as a delightfully philosophic critic, Muir's first literary work to be published was in verse. Later, he contributed a series of prose aphorisms to *The New Age* which were published in book form under the title of *We Moderns* (1918), a volume which aroused the enthusiasm of critics even more difficult to impress than H. L. Mencken.

In 1919, Muir became assistant editor of *The New Age*. Two years later, he gave up all editorial work, and went to live in Central Europe. It was while living in Austria that his *Latitudes* (1924), a collection of essays which are both playful and profound, appeared and attracted a greater audience than Muir had ever reached. Although his verse is little

known, it is Muir's favourite medium and reveals the same freshness of feeling as his prose.

THE ENCHANTED PRINCE

Here lying on the ancient mount,
  Through days grown stagnant and too rich,
My half-raised eyes keep sleepy count
  Of wild weeds springing in the ditch,

Of turf so quiet and so clean
  The sun's light seems more ancient there,
As if the softly slumbering green
  Had grown indifferent to the air.

And all worn smooth 'neath deadened years
  Which have forgotten that they roll,
Though at its secret term appears
  The lawful grass upon the knoll.

There lies the peace of ended toil
  Heavy and rich, too rich, as though
A race were mingled with the soil
  And could no more rise up and go.

A willow hangs above the vale,
  Here at my foot, and I have sight,
Through twisted branches dusty pale,
  Of distant hills in different light.

So inaccessible and so clear,
  The houses gleam on every hill!
The silent valley tumbles sheer,
  Like an abyss where time is still.

Yet here upon the enchanted mount
  I look out towards the farther heights,
And, lost far onward, strive to count
  Ambiguous shapes in shifting lights,

Till, where peaks battle in the haze,
  In mortal fight without a cry,
Upon unnameable things I gaze,
  And dragons rearing at the sky.

If now, turned back, I think again
  That all these lines which heaved and strove
Just now, were quiet earth, I fain
  Would perish of a boundless love. . . .

Here lying on the ancient mount,
  Through days grown stagnant and too rich,
My heart is dust, the while I count
  The wild weeds springing in the ditch.

GRASS

The vague immutable contour of the earth—
This insubstantial phantom of green hills
Which ever falling away forever change,
Perpetual mirage hung beyond Time's reach—
Is grass, which sets the round world in our sight.
Grass standing thick and still in soundless vales
No eye has seen, or straggling into wastes,
Beat down but spared by winds which tear up oaks;
Green in the sun, and beneath smothering mists,
Where each moist blade sweats one clear glistening drop;
Grass growing below huge rocks and round lone graves;

Climbing, a tiny host, up mountainsides;
Hanging on mist-locked keeps above dun lakes;
Tossing on low small islets on the tide,
Soft meadows mid the currents of the sea,
Where the green glossy blades drink the blue wave;
Grass waiting in dark table-lands of snow;
O'er new-riven chasms weaving its light veil,
And quiet fields o'er fallen and jagged peaks:
The invulnerable vesture of the world.

F. W. Harvey

Frederick William Harvey was born in Gloucestershire in 1888, and was educated at Rossall. He became a solicitor in 1912, enlisted in August, 1914, and was taken prisoner in 1916. It was in the German prison camp at Gütersloh that he wrote "The Bugler," one of the isolated great poems of the war.

Although much of his verse is haphazard and journalistic, several passages in *Gloucestershire Friends* (1917) and *Farewell* (1921) contain the stuff if not always the well-shaped spirit of poetry.

THE BUGLER

God dreamed a man;
Then, having firmly shut
Life like a precious metal in his fist
Withdrew, His labour done. Thus did begin
Our various divinity and sin.
For some to ploughshares did the metal twist,
And others—dreaming empires—straightway cut
Crowns for their aching foreheads. Others beat
Long nails and heavy hammers for the feet

Of their forgotten Lord. (Who dares to boast
That he is guiltless?) Others coined it: most
Did with it—simply nothing. (Here again
Who cries his innocence?) Yet doth remain
Metal unmarred, to each man more or less,
Whereof to fashion perfect loveliness.
For me, I do but bear within my hand
(For sake of Him our Lord, now long forsaken)
A simple bugle such as may awaken
With one high morning note a drowsing man:
That wheresoe'er within my motherland
That sound may come, 'twill echo far and wide
Like pipes of battle calling up a clan,
Trumpeting men through beauty to God's side.

Patrick MacGill

Patrick MacGill was born in Donegal in 1889. He was the son of poverty-stricken peasants and, between the ages of 12 and 19, worked as farm-servant, drainer, potato-digger, and navvy, becoming one of the thousands of stray "tramp-laborers" who cross each summer from Ireland to Scotland to help gather in the crops. Out of his bitter experiences and the evils of modern industrial life, he wrote several vivid novels (*The Rat Pit* is an unforgettable document) and the tragedy-crammed *Songs of the Dead End.*

MacGill joined the editorial staff of *The Daily Express* in 1911; was in the British army during the war; was wounded at Loos in 1915; and wrote his *Soldier Songs* during the conflict.

BY-THE-WAY

These be the little verses, rough and uncultured, which
I've written in hut and model, deep in the dirty ditch,
On the upturned hod by the palace made for the idle rich.

Out on the happy highway or lines where the engines go,
Which fact you may hardly credit, still for your doubts
'tis so,
For I am the person who wrote them, and surely to God
I know!

Wrote them beside the hot-plate or under the chilling
skies,
Some of them true as death is, some of them merely lies,
Some of them very foolish, some of them otherwise.

Little sorrows and hopings, little and rugged rhymes,
Some of them maybe distasteful to the moral men of our
times,
Some of them marked against me in the Book of the
Many Crimes.

These, the Songs of a Navvy, bearing the taint of the
brute,
Unasked, uncouth, unworthy out to the world I put,
Stamped with the brand of labor, the heel of a navvy's
boot.

W. J. Turner

Walter James (Redfern) Turner was born in Melbourne, Australia, in 1889. He was educated at Scotch College, Melbourne, and, at seventeen, made the long journey to Europe. He studied in Germany and, shortly afterward, came to England, where, except for short intervals of travel, he has lived ever since.

His activities have been numerous. He was literary editor of *The Daily Herald,* dramatic critic of *The London Mercury,* and is, at present, musical critic for three English weeklies. In the last rôle, his essays have been collected in two volumes, the

first being *Music and Life* (1921). Recently, Turner has made a reputation as a brilliantly incisive dramatist, publishing the highly imaginative *The Man Who Ate the Popomack* (1922) and the satiric *Smaragda's Lover* (1924).

But it is as a poet that Turner first aroused—and still challenges—attention. *The Hunter and other Poems* (1916) contains other matter worth attention besides the whimsical delicacy of "Romance," which has been so much quoted. *The Dark Fire* (1918) sounds greater depths; a repressed passion adds a sombre note to the bright fancies. Turner's more recent volumes, *Paris and Helen* (1921), *In Time Like Glass* (1921) and *Landscape of Cytherea* (1923), suffer from an overproductive and uncritical ease, but many of the individual poems are on a level with the author's most successful work.

ROMANCE

When I was but thirteen or so
  I went into a golden land,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
  Took me by the hand.

My father died, my brother too,
  They passed like fleeting dreams,
I stood where Popocatapetl
  In the sunlight gleams.

I dimly heard the master's voice
  And boys far-off at play,—
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
  Had stolen me away.

I walked in a great golden dream
  To and fro from school—
Shining Popocatapetl
  The dusty streets did rule.

I walked home with a gold dark boy
  And never a word I'd say,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
  Had taken my speech away.

I gazed entranced upon his face
  Fairer than any flower—
O shining Popocatapetl
  It was thy magic hour:

The houses, people, traffic seemed
  Thin fading dreams by day;
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi,
  They had stolen my soul away!

SONG

Lovely hill-torrents are
  At cold winterfall;
Among the earth's silence, they
  Stonily call.

Gone Autumn's pageantry;
  Through woods all bare
With strange, locked voices
  Shining they stare!

THE ROBBER

The Trees were taller than the night,
  And through my window square,
Earth-stupefied, great oranges
  Drowsed in the leaf-carved air.

Into that tree-top crowded dream
  A white arm stretched, and soon
Those green-gold oranges were plucked,
  Were sucked pale by the Moon.

And white and still that robber lay
  On the frail boughs asleep,
Eating the solid substance through
  In silence clear and deep.

Suddenly he went, and then
  The wood was dark as death:
Come back, O robber; robber, come;
  These grey trees are but breath:

These grey trees are but breath, the Night
  Is a wind-walled, dream-filled Hall!
But on the mirror of the air
  The wood wreathed dark and tall.

No movement and no sound there was
  Within that silent House.
Behind a cloud, the Robber laughed
  In a mad white carouse.

TALKING WITH SOLDIERS

The mind of the people is like mud,
From which arise strange and beautiful things,
But mud is none the less mud,
Though it bear orchids and prophesying Kings,
Dreams, trees, and water's bright babblings.

It has found form and colour and light,
The cold glimmer of the ice-wrapped Poles;
It has called a far-off glow: Arcturus,
And some pale weeds: lilies of the valley.

It has imagined Virgil, Helen and Cassandra,
The sack of Troy, and the weeping for Hector—
Rearing stark up 'mid all this beauty
In the thick, dull neck of Ajax.

There is a dark Pine in Lapland,
And the great, figured Horn of the Reindeer
Moving soundlessly across the snow,
Is its twin brother, double-dreamed,
In the mind of a far-off people.

It is strange that a little mud
Should echo with sounds, syllables, and letters,
Should rise up and call a mountain Popocatapetl,
And a green-leafed wood Oleander.

These are the ghosts of invisible things;
There is no Lapland, no Helen and no Hector,
And the Reindeer is a darkening of the brain,
And Oleander is but oleander.

Mary Magdalena and the vine Lachryma Christi,
Were like ghosts up the ghost of Vesuvius,
As I sat and drank wine with the soldiers,
As I sat in the Inn on the mountain,
Watching the shadows in my mind.

The mind of the people is like mud:
Where are the imperishable things,
The ghosts that flicker in the brain—
Silent women, orchids, and prophesying Kings,
Dreams, trees, and water's bright babblings!

T. P. Cameron Wilson

"Tony" P. Cameron Wilson was born in South Devon in 1889 and was educated at Exeter and Oxford. He wrote one novel besides several articles under the pseudonym *Tipuca,* a euphonic combination of the first three initials of his name. Wilson's collected poems, *Magpies in Picardy,* published by The Poetry Bookshop, appeared posthumously in 1919.

When the war broke out he was a teacher in a school at Hindhead, Surrey, and, after many months of gruelling conflict, he was given a captaincy. He was killed in action by a machine-gun bullet March 23, 1918, at the age of 29.

SPORTSMEN IN PARADISE

They left the fury of the fight,
  And they were very tired.
The gates of Heaven were open quite,
  Unguarded and unwired.
There was no sound of any gun,
  The land was still and green;
Wide hills lay silent in the sun,
  Blue valleys slept between.

They saw far-off a little wood
  Stand up against the sky.
Knee-deep in grass a great tree stood;
  Some lazy cows went by . . .

There were some rocks called overhead,
And once a church-bell pealed.
"God has it's Festival," someone said
"And they're a pride-ful."

Viola Meynell

Viola Meynell, daughter of Alice Meynell (see page 91), has written for the volume of poetry, Verses (1909), but their usual collection contains several highly individualised poems which compare favourably to those of her mother.

Besides her two novels, she has recently published a collection of unusually subtle short stories, Young Mrs. Greatorex.

JONAH AND THE WHALE

He roamed around the watery world.
His rich oil was a gloomy wanderer's lure
Within the waves. Affrighted seamen hurled
Their weapons at his roaming water.

One all unwilling prey he bore
Which penetrated through his flesh but yet had not
Found out his life. Another home he wore
Outside him pricking in a tender spot.

So driven were his parts that they
Sent but a dull faint message to his brain.
He knew not his own flesh as great kings may
Not know the farther places where they reign.

His play made music in a calm sea;
His very kindness slew what he might touch;
And wrecks lay scattered on his anger's lee.
The Moon rocked to and fro his watery couch.

His hunger cleared the sea. And where
He passed, the ocean's edge lifted to him.
He skimmed the dim sea-floor to find it there
Some garden laid in harvest ripe for him.

But in his dogged brain no thought
Ever arose. His love was servant-blind.
No thought or plans or vision ever brought
Light to the dark of his old dreamless mind.

Until one day sudden and strange
Half-born of knowledge burst upon his sight.
Glimpses he had of Time, and Space, and Change.
And something greater than his might.

And terror's key to imagine set:
And thinking Truth half-born unto his seeing.
It was the living man who had cause to ... -
Jonah's thoughts living through his being.

Dorothy M. Richardson

Dorothy M. Richardson, known chiefly as a novelist of extraordinary sensitivity and highly original vision, has allowed but little of her verse to appear in print. Among her detailed studies of character the most representative verses are *Pointed Roofs* (1915), *Honeycomb* (1917), *Deadlock* (1921), *Revolving Lights* (1923). To us the present is volume containing her poetry has appeared.

FREEDOM

There is no truth but mine to make me free.
And free I am, since my truth shows me bound.
Being is freedom, moving step by step
To sudden flight and falling.
Falling and flight again. Whatever moves
Is free, and all things move, led by their mystery.
The smallest step sets free to be aware
Of their soft breath when roses fill the air.

Camilla Doyle

Camilla Doyle was born at Cathedral Close, Norwich, where she has lived ever since. Besides being a writer, Miss Doyle is well known as an artist and craftsman, having exhibited her paintings and furniture at various galleries.

Her *Poems* (1923) reveal the same sensitivity to line and motion as her drawings; even so tiny a sketch as "The Rabbit" has the faithful economy of a Japanese print, while "March" is a whimsical painting in the modern manner.

THE RABBIT

All day this spring—the first he's known—
He lets himself be sideways blown
When the wind comes; he'll leap and pounce,
And try to rush two ways at once,
On feet that catch the very sound
Cascades make spattering to the ground.
  Though men with difficulty sing how soon
    They die, how seldom living they can thrive,

He makes a little dancing-tune
  By only being alive;
No leaf that April winds blow off the tree
Falls and leaps round again so gay as he.

MARCH

Green triangles have come on the ground,
  Green fretted things that we shall see
Grown to wild parsley soon. The hens
  Are talking news excitedly.

Big dimples stay in the sparrows' fluff,
  They preen with such fine energy.
The very dust's alert. His songs
  The blackbird stirs from memory—

The prettiest one he knew last year
  Is still a soft uncertainty.
The catkins drip like honey spilt,
  The cock crows twice as frequently.

And the wind rises, tossing back
  The spring: "You'll like it more," says he,
"For twisting aside, like the blackbird's song,
  And vexing you with 'Presently.'"

Muriel Stuart

Muriel Stuart first attracted attention with "Christ at Carnival," a long poem which appeared in The English Review in 1915. This, later, became the title-poem of her first volume, published during the following year. More lyrical, however,

are *The Cockpit of Idols and other Poems* (1918) and *Poems* (1922), in both of which the verse suggests an imaginative strength beneath its smooth contours.

THE SEED SHOP

Here in a quiet and dusty room they lie,
Faded as crumbled stone or shifting sand,
Forlorn as ashes, shrivelled, scentless, dry—
Meadows and gardens running through my hand.

Dead that shall quicken at the call of Spring,
Sleepers to stir beneath June's magic kiss,
Though birds pass over, unremembering,
And no bee seek here roses that were his.

In this brown husk, a dale of hawthorn dreams;
A cedar in this narrow cell is thrust
That will drink deeply of a century's streams.
These lilies shall make summer on my dust.

Here in their safe and simple house of death,
Sealed in their shells, a million roses leap;
Here I can blow a garden with my breath,
And in my hand a forest lies asleep.

Fredegond Shove

Fredegond Shove was nothing more than an unfamiliar but provocative name until the appearance of her group of four poems in the 1918-1919 issue of *Georgian Poetry*. Her own volume, *Dreams and Journeys* (1919), displays a richer command of imagery which, without straining for any novelty of utter-

ance, is far removed from the traditional poetic jargon. Writing chiefly about simple things, she is able to invest her casual subjects with a decided freshness. An anonymous critic in The Chapbook remarked, "Her poetry is like sunlight on a green hill. It is always the same sun and the same hill, but the imagination of the beholder sees it each time in a new and beautiful light."

A MAN DREAMS HE IS THE CREATOR

I sat in heaven like the sun
  Above a storm when winter was:
I took the snowflakes one by one
  And turned their fragile shapes to glass:
I washed the rivers blue with rain
And made the meadows green again.

I took the birds and touched their springs,
  Until they sang unearthly joys:
They flew about on golden wings
  And glittered like an angel's toys:
I filled the fields with flowers' eyes,
As white as stars in Paradise.

And then I looked on man and knew
  Him still intent on death, still proud.
Whereat into a rage I flew
  And turned my body to a cloud:
In the dark shower of my soul
The star of earth was swallowed whole.

Isaac Rosenberg was born at Bristol on November 25, 1890. At the age of seven his parents brought him to London; at fourteen he was compelled to leave school and work for his living. Later, some friends interested themselves in the boy, who had begun to show great talent as a writer and draftsman, and made it possible for the young Jew from the East End to attend the Slade School. After three years of art schooling, during which Rosenberg won prizes as well as praise, ill health forced him to leave England. In 1914, he went to South Africa, having a married sister in Capetown. It was there that he definitely decided to become a poet. He attempted to support himself by writing and lecturing, but his efforts were without success and, in less than a year, he was back in London. War had broken out. Sick and unhappy, Rosenberg enlisted in 1915. Early in 1916, he was sent to France, totally unfitted for military life. Nevertheless, his endurance was amazing; he hated war with all the force of his keen mind and disabled body, but he never whined. He was killed in action on April 1, 1918.

As a poet, Rosenberg is greater in promise than achievement. Most of the privately printed *Night and Day* (1912), although published at the age of twenty-two, was written in his 'teens. Even the succeeding *Youth* (1915) suffers from verbal awkwardness; a fear of falling into weak writing led him to complicate his images until they are, for the most part, turgid and overburdened. But in *Moses* (1916), and in the posthumous war-poems, the passionate young poet speaks in his own half-savage voice. Here and there, a passage suggests Abercrombie, whom Rosenberg admired greatly; but the images are so fiercely fresh, the accent so personal, that there is no mistaking the strength and originality of Rosenberg's gift.

Rosenberg's three small books, as well as a quantity of uncollected verse including an unfinished play, were published in one volume, *Poems,* in 1922. Not the least remarkable feature of this unusual collection is the fact that the contents were selected and edited by Gordon Bottomley and the introductory memoir was supplied by Laurence Binyon.

THE ONE LOST

I mingle with your bones;
You steal in subtle noose
This lighted dust Jehovah loans
And now I lose.

What will the Lender say
When I shall not be found,
Safe-sheltered at the Judgment Day,
Being in you bound?

He'll hunt through wards of Heaven,
Call to uncoffined earth,
"Where is this soul, unjudged, not given
Dole for good's dearth?"

And I, lying so safe
Within you, hearing all,
To have cheated God shall laugh,
Freed by your thrall.

THE JEW

Moses, from whose loins I sprung,
Lit by a lamp in his blood
Ten immutable rules, a moon
For mutable lampless men.

The blonde, the bronze, the ruddy,
With the same heaving blood,
Keep tide to the moon of Moses.
Then why do they sneer at me?

THE DEAD HEROES

Flame out, you glorious skies,
Welcome our brave;
Kiss their exultant eyes;
Give what they gave.

Flash, mailèd seraphim,
Your burning spears;
New days to outflame their dim
Heroic years.

Thrills their baptismal tread
The bright proud air;
The embattled plumes outspread
Burn upwards there.

Flame out, flame out, O Song!
Star, ring to star!
Strong as our hurt is strong,
Our children are.

Their blood is England's heart;
By their dead hands,
It is their noble part
That England stands.

England—Time gave them thee;
They gave back this
To win Eternity
And claim God's kiss.

Francis Ledwidge was born in Slane, County Meath, Ireland, in 1891. His brief life was fitful and uncertain. He was, at various times, a miner, a grocer's clerk, a farmer, a scavenger, an experimenter in hypnotism, and, at the end, a soldier. He served as a lance-corporal on the Flanders front and was killed in July, 1917, at the age of 26 years.

Ledwidge's poetry is rich in nature-drawing; his lines are full of romantic charm. Obviously influenced by the sensuous imagery of Keats, his twilight-colored verse is unaffectedly melodious.

Discovered and sponsored by Lord Dunsany, Ledwidge published two volumes during his lifetime: *Songs of the Fields* (1914) and *Songs of Peace* (1916). Both books (as well as the posthumous *Last Songs*) were incorporated in *Complete Poems* (1919).

AN EVENING IN ENGLAND

From its blue vase the rose of evening drops;
Upon the streams its petals float away.
The hills all blue with distance hide their tops
In the dim silence falling on the grey.
A little wind said "Hush!" and shook a spray
Heavy with May's white crop of opening bloom;
A silent bat went dipping in the gloom.

Night tells her rosary of stars full soon,
They drop from out her dark hand to her knees.
Upon a silhouette of woods, the moon
Leans on one horn as if beseeching ease
From all her changes which have stirred the seas.
Across the ears of Toil, Rest throws her veil.
I and a marsh bird only make a wail.

EVENING CLOUDS

A little flock of clouds go down to rest
In some blue corner off the moon's highway,
With shepherd-winds that shook them in the West
To borrowed shapes of earth, in bright array,
Perhaps to weave a rainbow's gay festoons
Around the lonesome isle which Brooke has made
A little England full of lovely noons,
Or dot it with his country's mountain shade.

Ah, little wanderers, when you reach that isle[1]
Tell him, with dripping dew, they have not failed,
What he loved most; for late I roamed a while
Thro' English fields and down her rivers sailed;
And they remember him with beauty caught
From old desires of Oriental Spring
Heard in his heart with singing overwrought;
And still on Purley Common gooseboys sing.

EVENING IN FEBRUARY

The windy evening drops a grey
Old eyelid down across the sun;
The last crow leaves the ploughman's way,
And happy lambs make no more fun.

Wild parsley buds beside my feet,
A doubtful thrush makes hurried tune,
The steeple in the village street
Now seems to pierce the twilight moon.

[1] The island of Skyros where Rupert Brooke was buried. (See page 289.)

I hear and see these changing charms,
For all my thoughts are fixed upon
The hurry and the loud alarms
Before the fall of Babylon.

Irene Rutherford McLeod

Irene Rutherford McLeod, born August 21, 1891, has written three volumes of direct and often distinguished verse, the best of which may be found in *Songs to Save a Soul* (1915) and *Before Dawn* (1918). The latter volume is dedicated to A. de Sélincourt, to whom she was married in 1919.

"IS LOVE, THEN, SO SIMPLE"

Is love, then, so simple my dear?
The opening of a door,
And seeing all things clear?
I did not know before.

I had thought it unrest and desire
Soaring only to fall,
Annihilation and fire:
It is not so at all.

I feel no desperate will,
But I think I understand
Many things, as I sit quite still,
With Eternity in my hand.

LONE DOG

I'm a lean dog, a keen dog, a wild dog, and lone;
I'm a rough dog, a tough dog, hunting on my own;
I'm a bad dog, a mad dog, teasing silly sheep;
I love to sit and bay the moon, to keep fat souls from sleep.

I'll never be a lap dog, licking dirty feet,
A sleek dog, a meek dog, cringing for my meat,
Not for me the fireside, the well-filled plate,
But shut door, and sharp stone, and cuff and kick, and hate.

Not for me the other dogs, running by my side,
Some have run a short while, but none of them would bide.
O mine is still the lone trail, the hard trail, the best,
Wide wind, and wild stars, and hunger of the quest!

Richard Aldington

Richard Aldington was born in England in 1892, and educated at Dover College and London University. His first poems were published in England in 1909; *Images Old and New* appeared in 1915. Aldington and "H. D." (the chief American Imagist) are conceded to be two of the foremost imagist poets; their sensitive and clean-cut lines put to shame their scores of imitators.

Aldington's *War and Love* (1918) is somewhat more regular in pattern; the poems in this latter volume are less consciously artistic but more searching. Recently, Aldington, in common with most of the *vers libristes,* has been writing in regular

rhythms and fixed forms. His *Exile and other Poems* (1923) contains whole sections of curiously archaic, pseudo-Elizabethan songs.

IMAGES

I

Like a gondola of green scented fruits
Drifting along the dank canals of Venice,
You, O exquisite one,
Have entered into my desolate city.

II

The blue smoke leaps
Like swirling clouds of birds vanishing.
So my love leaps forth toward you,
Vanishes and is renewed.

III

A rose-yellow moon in a pale sky
When the sunset is faint vermilion
In the mist among the tree-boughs
Art thou to me, my beloved.

IV

A young beech tree on the edge of the forest
Stands still in the evening,
Yet shudders through all its leaves in the
light air
And seems to fear the stars—
So are you still and so tremble.

V

The red deer are high on the mountain,
They are beyond the last pine trees.
And my desires have run with them.

VI

The flower which the wind has shaken
Is soon filled again with rain;
So does my heart fill slowly with tears,
O Foam-Driver, Wind-of-the-Vineyards,
Until you return.

AFTER TWO YEARS

She is all so slight
And tender and white
    As a May morning.
She walks without hood
At dusk. It is good
    To hear her sing.

It is God's will
That I shall love her still
    As he loves Mary,
And night and day
I will go forth to pray
    That she love me.

She is as gold
Lovely, and far more cold.
    Do thou pray with me,
For if I win grace
To kiss twice her face
    God has done well to me.

Edward Shanks was born in London in 1892 and educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. He has reviewed verse and *belles-lettres* for several years for various English publications, and is an assistant editor of *The London Mercury*. He was the first winner of the Hawthornden Prize in 1919; his *The Queen of China and Other Poems* appearing in the same year. Since that volume, he has published *People of the Ruins* (1920) and *The Island of Youth* (1921).

COMPLAINT

When in the mines of dark and silent thought
Sometimes I delve and find strange fancies there,
With heavy labour to the surface brought
That lie and mock me in the brighter air,
Poor ores from starvèd lodes of poverty,
Unfit for working or to be refined,
That in the darkness cheat the miner's eye,
I turn away from that base cave, the mind.
Yet had I but the power to crush the stone
There are strange metals hid in flakes therein,
Each flake a spark sole-hidden and alone,
That only cunning, toilsome chemists win.
All this I know, and yet my chemistry
Fails and the pregnant treasures useless lie.

Edith Sitwell

Edith Sitwell, daughter of Sir George and Lady Ida Sitwell, granddaughter of the Earl of Landesborough, was born at Scarborough, Yorkshire. She was educated, as she puts it, "in secrecy" and, in 1914 came to London, where she has lived

ever since. A portrait of her, painted by Alvaro Guevara, has been bought for the nation and hangs in the Tate Gallery.

In 1916, she began the editing of *Wheels,* a determinedly modern anthology which outraged most of the conservative critics. Her own poems provided an even greater series of shocks. After a mild and undistinguished début—*The Mother and other Poems* (1915)—Miss Sitwell published, in a succession so speedy as to seem little less than rapid-fire, *Clown's Houses* (1918), *The Wooden Pegasus* (1920), *Façade* (1922), *Bucolic Comedies* (1923). In these volumes—particularly in the last two—Miss Sitwell limits her gamut; but, within her range, there is no poet quite like her. Her favorite instrument seems to be the xylophone, and it is amazing what effects she produces from its restricted timbre. Miss Sitwell is a virtuoso in the communication of a half-wooden, half-glassy tone which is seldom without brilliance. It has been objected that Miss Sitwell's poetry is artificial, and this may be true. But the criticism is not as devastating as it seems, for hers is obviously an artificial world. It is a curious, semi-mechanical heaven and earth over which her keen eye ranges, a landscape in which Miss Sitwell sees vividly, as none before her has seen, skies of paper, seas of wool, furry fires, "blunt stalactites of rain," the "reynard-coloured sun," the world "like a bare egg laid by the feathered air," the "coltish wind nuzzling the hand," trees "hissing like green geese," "barley-sugar children,"—she even hears Silence "like a slow-leaking tap." If Miss Sitwell's is nothing but a clock-work, conjuring-trick sort of poetry—and it is much more than that—there has rarely been so dazzling a set of ingenuities, so brilliant an exhibition of verbal legerdemain.

But, as I have already maintained, Miss Sitwell is much more than an adroit juggler of startling phrases. Purely as nonsense, she has written some of the most delectable nonsense verses of the age; her grotesque nursery rhymes are, in their own genre, as memorable as De la Mare's. The secret of her serious poetry is scarcely more difficult to capture. After one's initial bewilderment (due chiefly to the galloping pace of her verse), the wit of her comments, the fitness of her strange associations, the fitful romanticism of an essentially feminine mind—all these lie ready to disclose themselves beneath the surface glitter.

The readers who have been waiting for Miss Sitwell to "humanize" her hard, bright idiom, will be richly rewarded by *The Sleeping Beauty* (1924). Here, in what is obviously her finest work so far, she achieves a unity, a sustained poignance, which her other work, for all its felicities, never expressed. Here, to her scorn of those to whom life is a vegetable existence, Miss Sitwell adds the note of compassion. Reflecting life no longer from the outside, her brilliance, which formerly awakened nothing deeper than surprise, first arouses and then wins one's sympathy.

INTERLUDE

Amid this hot green glowing gloom
A word falls with a raindrop's boom . . .

Like baskets of ripe fruit in air
The bird-songs seem, suspended where

Those goldfinches—the ripe warm lights
Peck slyly at them—take quick flights.

My feet are feathered like a bird
Among the shadows scarcely heard;

I bring you branches green with dew
And fruits that you may crown anew

Your whirring waspish-gilded hair
Amid this cornucopia—

Until your warm lips bear the stains
And bird-blood leap within your veins.

AUBADE

Jane, Jane,
Tall as a crane,
The morning light creaks down again.

Comb your cockscomb-ragged hair;
Jane, Jane, come down the stair.

Each dull blunt wooden stalactite
Of rain creaks, hardened by the light,

Sounding like an overtone
From some lonely world unknown.

But the creaking empty light
Will never harden into sight,

Will never penetrate your brain
With overtones like the blunt rain.

The light would show (if it could harden)
Eternities of kitchen-garden,

Cockscomb flowers that none will pluck,
And wooden flowers that 'gin to cluck.

In the kitchen you must light
Flames as staring, red and white

As carrots or as turnips, shining
Where the cold dawn light lies whining.

Cockscomb hair on the cold wind
Hangs limp, turns the milk's weak mind. . . .

Jane, Jane,
Tall as a crane,
The morning light creaks down again!

THE KING OF CHINA'S DAUGHTER

The King of China's daughter,
She never would love me
Though I hung my cap and bells upon
Her nutmeg tree.
For oranges and lemons,
The stars in bright blue air,
(I stole them long ago, my dear)
Were dangling there.
The Moon did give me silver pence,
The Sun did give me gold,
And both together softly blew
And made my porridge cold;
But the King of China's daughter
Pretended not to see,
When I hung my cap and bells upon
Her nutmeg tree.

SOLO FOR EAR-TRUMPET

The carriage brushes through the bright
Leaves (violent jets from life to light).
Strong polished speed is plunging, heaves
Between the showers of bright hot leaves.

The window-glasses glaze our faces
And jar them to the very basis,—
But they could never put a polish
Upon my manners, or abolish
My most distinct disinclination
For calling on a rich relation!
In her house,—bulwark built between
The life man lives and visions seen,—
The sunlight hiccups white as chalk,
Grown drunk with emptiness of talk,
And silence hisses like a snake,
Invertebrate and rattling ache.

. . . . .

Till suddenly, Eternity
Drowns all the houses like a sea,
And down the street the Trump of Doom
Blares,—barely shakes this drawing-room
Where raw-edged shadows sting forlorn
As dank dark nettles. Down the horn
Of her ear-trumpet I convey
The news that: "It is Judgment Day!"
"Speak louder; I don't catch, my dear."
I roared: *"It is the Trump we hear!"*
"The *What?*"—"The T R U M P !" . . . "I
shall complain—
Those boy-scouts practising again!"

Osbert Sitwell

Osbert Sitwell (son of Sir George Sitwell and brother of Sacheverell and Edith Sitwell) was born in London, December 6, 1892, was educated at Eton, and became an officer in the Grenadier Guards, with whom he served in France for various

periods from 1914 to 1917. After contesting the 1918 election at Scarborough in the Liberal interests, he devoted himself entirely to literature.

His first contributions appeared in *Wheels* (an annual anthology of a few of the younger radical writers, edited by his sister) and disclosed an ironic and individual touch. That impression is strengthened by a reading of *Argonaut and Juggernant* (1920), where Sitwell's cleverness and satire are intensified if not fused. His most remarkable though his least brilliant poems are his irregular and fiery protests against smugness and hypocrisy. But even Sitwell's more conventional poetry has a freshness of movement and definiteness of outline.

Out of the Flame (1923) reinforces this judgment. It is in two parts; a contrast, not a combination. There is the world of ideal beauty which the poet loves and the world of idle luxury which rouses his satirical hate. In spite of a certain wildness, Sitwell rarely misses his mark.

THE BLIND PEDLAR

I stand alone through each long day
Upon these pavers; cannot see
The wares spread out upon this tray
—For God has taken sight from me!

Many a time I've cursed the night
When I was born. My peering eyes
Have sought for but one ray of light
To pierce the darkness. When the skies

Rain down their first sweet April showers
On budding branches; when the morn
Is sweet with breath of spring and flowers,
I've cursed the night when I was born.

But now I thank God, and am glad
For what I cannot see this day
—The young men cripples, old, and sad,
With faces burnt and torn away;

Or those who, growing rich and old,
Have battened on the slaughter,
Whose faces, gorged with blood and gold,
Are creased in purple laughter!

FOUNTAINS [1]

Proud fountains, wave your plumes,
Spread out your phœnix-wing,
Let the tired trees rejoice
Beneath your blossoming
(Tired trees, you whisper low).

High up, high up, above
These green and drooping sails,
A fluttering young wind
Hovers and dives, but fails
To steal a foaming feather.

Sail, like a crystal ship,
Above your sea of glass;
Then, with your quickening touch,
Transmute the things that pass
(Come down, cool wind, come down).

[1] Compare the poem on the same subject on page 370.

All humble things proclaim,
Within your magic net,
Their kinship to the Gods.
More strange and lovely yet
All lovely things become.

Dead, sculptured stone assumes
The life, from which it came;
The kingfisher is now
A moving tongue of flame,
A blue, live tongue of flame—

While birds, less proud of wing,
Crouch, in wind-ruffled shade,
Hide shyly, then pour out,
Their jealous serenade;
. . . Close now your golden wings!

F. V. Branford

Frederick Victor Branford was born in 1892 in London and, as a child, moved to Scotland where his family had been for generations. He was educated at Edinburgh and Leyden Universities, served in the Air Force during the war, and has been living in the North of Scotland since 1918, recovering from disablement received in service.

His two volumes *Titans and Gods* (1922) and *The White Stallion* (1924) vibrate with an unusual intensity. Related to no particular group, Branford is a passionately intellectual poet. Or rather, his art is the emotional apprehension of the beauty inherent in intellectual nature. His emotion, partly philosophic, partly metaphysical, leads him to compose long cantatas, odes based on theses which in themselves are difficult to follow. But his shorter poems are no more complicated than those of any poet who, like Francis Thompson, sees the mystical image behind all reality.

ANY DAISY[1]

I address
Her Mightiness
In fear.

Nor have forgot
That she is not
More near,

Nor more far
Than any star
To me;

Then am I
Afraid, and cry
For Thee.

"Lord! Be kind,
For I am blind
With shame.

"Lord, is this
A flower or is
She flame?"

SECRET TREATIES

We thought to find a cross like Calvary's,
And queened proud England with a diadem
Of thorns. Impetuous armies clamouring
For war, from the far utterance of the seas

[1] Comparc the poem on the same theme on page 57.

We sprang, to win a new Jerusalem.
Now is our shame, for we have seen you fling
Full-sounding honour from your lips like phlegm
And bargain up our soul in felonies.
O England, it were better men should read,
In dusty chronicles, of how a death
Had found thee in the van of these crusades;
To tell their eager sons with bated breath,
And burning eyes, about a golden deed,
A vanished race, and high unmortal Shades.

SHAKESPEARE

When to the market-place of dreams I went
To bid a penny for the firmament,
I sudden came upon a star-high man
Whose mighty composition hid the sun
With wings as wide as worlds; and, when he ran
In space, I thought that wind and he were one.
Abrupt he checks those truceless feet and stands
Deliberate with lightnings in his hands,
Over the Sphinx. Created things attend,
The speculations of the gods descend
Upon Earth's human champion stood at bay.
A moment's pause—slow subtle smile—and he,
Murmuring "Lord! what fools these mortals be!"
Heedless and headlong goes his boisterous way.

Robert Nichols was born on the Isle of Wight in 1893. His first volume, *Invocations* (1915), was published while he was at the front, Nichols having joined the army while still an undergraduate at Trinity College, Oxford. After serving one year as second lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery, he was incapacitated by shell shock, visiting America in 1918-19 as a lecturer. His *Ardours and Endurances* (1917) is the most representative work of this poet, although his *The Budded Branch* (1918) and *Aurelia* (1920) show an advance in power.

Since 1920, Nichols has devoted himself to drama and philosophic fiction, *The Smile of the Sphinx* (1921) being followed by *Guilty Souls* (1922).

NEARER

Nearer and ever nearer . . .
My body, tired but tense,
Hovers 'twixt vague pleasure
And tremulous confidence.

Arms to have and to use them
And a soul to be made
Worthy, if not worthy;
If afraid, unafraid.

To endure for a little,
To endure and have done:
Men I love about me,
Over me the sun!

And should at last suddenly
Fly the speeding death,
The four great quarters of heaven
Receive this little breath.

Wilfred Owen's biography is pitifully brief. He was born at Oswestry on the 18th of March, 1893, was educated at the Birkenhead Institute, matriculated at London University in 1910, obtained a private tutorship in 1913 near Bordeaux and remained there for two years. In 1915, in spite of delicate health, he joined the Artist's Rifles, served in France from 1916 to June, 1917, when he was invalided home. Fourteen months later, he returned to the Western Front, was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry in October, and was killed while trying to get his men across the Sambre Canal—with tragic irony—a week before the armistice, on November 4, 1918.

Owen's name was unknown to the world until his friend Siegfried Sassoon unearthed the contents of his posthumous volume, *Poems* (1920), to which Sassoon wrote the introduction. It was evident at once that here was one of the most important contributions to the literature of the War, expressed by a poet whose courage was only surpassed by his integrity of mind and nobility of soul. The restrained passion as well as the pitiful outcries in Owen's poetry have a spiritual kinship with Sassoon's stark verses. They reflect that second stage of the war, when the glib patter wears thin and the easy patriotics have a sardonic sound in the dug-outs and trenches. "He never," writes Sassoon, "wrote his poems (as so many war-poets did) to make the effect of a personal gesture. He pitied others; he did not pity himself."

It is difficult to choose among the score of Owen's compelling and compassionate poems, which are, incidentally, highly interesting in technique and rhyme-variations. Time will undoubtedly make a place for lines as authentic as the magnificent "Apologia pro Poemate Meo," the poignant "Greater Love," the brief but majestic dirge, "Anthem for Doomed Youth."

APOLOGIA PRO POEMATE MEO

I, too, saw God through mud—
The mud that cracked on cheeks when wretches smiled.
War brought more glory to their eyes than blood,
And gave their laughs more glee than shakes a child.

Merry it was to laugh there—
Where death becomes absurd and life absurder.
For power was on us as we slashed bones bare
Not to feel sickness or remorse of murder.

I, too, have dropped off fear—
Behind the barrage, dead as my platoon,
And sailed my spirit surging, light and clear
Past the entanglement where hopes lay strewn;

And witnessed exultation—
Faces that used to curse me, scowl for scowl,
Shine and lift up with passion of oblation,
Seraphic for an hour, though they were foul.

I have made fellowships—
Untold of happy lovers in old song.
For love is not the binding of fair lips
With the soft silk of eyes that look and long,

By Joy, whose ribbon slips,—
But wound with war's hard wire whose stakes are strong;
Bound with the bandage of the arm that drips;
Knit in the welding of the rifle-thong.

I have perceived much beauty
In the hoarse oaths that kept our courage straight;
Heard music in the silentness of duty;
Found peace where shell-storms spouted reddest spate.

Nevertheless, except you share
With them in hell the sorrowful dark of hell,
Whose world is but the trembling of a flare,
And heaven but as the highway for a shell,

You shall not hear their mirth:
You shall not come to think them well content
By any jest of mine. These men are worth
Your tears: You are not worth their merriment.

ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them; no prayers nor bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

GREATER LOVE

Red lips are not so red
As the stained stones kissed by the English dead.
Kindness of wooed and wooer
Seems shame to their love pure.
O Love, your eyes lose lure
When I behold eyes blinded in my stead!

Your slender attitude
    Trembles not exquisite like limbs knife-skewed,
Rolling and rolling there
Where God seems not to care;
Till the fierce love they bear
    Cramps them in death's extreme decrepitude.

Your voice sings not so soft,—
    Though even as wind murmuring through raftered
        loft,—
Your dear voice is not clear,
Gentle, and evening clear,
As theirs whom none now hear
    Now earth has stopped their piteous mouths that
        coughed.

Heart, you were never hot,
    Nor large, nor full like hearts made great with shot;
And though your hand be pale,
Paler are all which trail
Your cross through flame and hail:
    Weep, you may weep, for you may touch them not.

Frank Prewett

Frank Prewett was born on a farm near Mount Forest, Ontario, Canada, of a pioneer family, August 24, 1893. He attended University College, Toronto, and joined the University officers' Training Corps on the outbreak of war, but enlisted in the ranks shortly afterwards. He served, as he puts it, "uneventfully" at the Front. After peace was declared, he entered Oxford as an undergraduate, and subsequently has lived as a farmer near Abingdon, Berkshire.

Prewett's first publication was a little volume, *Poems* (1920),

which sounded an agreeable though not unusual note. His *The Rural Scene* (1924) is far more personal. In his condensed simplicities, Prewett strikes the truly pastoral note. Bound to the soil by inheritance as well as by a natural affection, the poet never strains to achieve that *naïveté* which one so often finds in the work of many of the Georgians. His is an instinctive expression of "the rural scene" with rarely a trace of literary affectation.

"OUT OF THE NIGHT"

Out of the night they drop with troubled cries,
  Splitting the keen-tuned freezing air,
Lone travellers through the wind-cut skies
  Instinct-propelled to regions harsh and bare.

They settle with loud shuffling midst the snow;
  The pitiless cold hushes all things to peace;
And I reluctant silent homeward go,
  But leave my soul to chatter with the geese.

Oh, ye mysterious creatures swift and high
  That beat in angle-flights from land to land,
Whence came into your breasts your troubled cry
  And strange desire that gathers you like sand!

With the first streak of dawn they crane their necks,
  Cry out aloud, and rise upon the air,
Taking with them my soul, nor much it recks
  Towards what homeless wastes their flight may bear.

"WHEN CUCKOO FIRST"

When cuckoo first the vale o'erflows
  With barks and bubble-blasts of sound,
And daisies white, or tinctured rose,
  Make a pleasanter sky the ground,
Then maids are trim and neatly seen
  And youth strides godly under green.

Spring is a season we revive
  With the upthrusting hedgy things,
When yellowhammers courtship drive
  And old cock-pheasants busk their wings,
Then cows dream udder-deep in grass
  And hawk over hovers with eye of glass.

Cheevio-chee trills on the spray,
  He finds his life so good;
Oh, now be natural and gay
  Like the kind God meant we should,
For all things beautiful, sight and sound,
  Love made, and make love to abound.

Richard Church

Richard Church was born in London in 1893 and began to write at the age of eighteen, having by that time also obtained a permanent post in the Civil Service. He has written for the majority of the weeklies, particularly *The Spectator,* for which he is a regular reviewer.

His volume, *Philip* (1921), reveals the work of an artist extremely sensitive to the implications behind the physical fact; a poet who, like a lesser Robert Frost, combines the power of sight with insight.

THE LANTERN

She swings the lantern. Night around her
Swings out, swings in; the roadside falls.
Under her feet abysmal darkness sinks;
Then from the pit, to meet her feet,
Earth rises, sombre stones and steady soil
Loom up, stare at the lantern, then . . .
Sink, sink again as it swings.

On she tramps, towering above the lantern,
All her daylight beauty lifted away,
Underlit, and drenched with the dye,
The smudgy gold of the drowsy beams from the lantern.
Over the light her hip turns smooth and strong,
Rolling the shadows to and fro on its breadth,
To and fro in rhythm as on she swings.—
The gaunt trees over her leap, and mope, and bow.—
And one deep breast, like the old moon lacking light,
Rides above, rimmed with a ghostly line,
Then waxes full as the lantern swings before.
Crowning this wild-lit moving life,
The aureoled hair glows gold, a smoke-veiled fire,
Flaming and changing, but ever her crown as she swings
On, swings on, steady and sure, while the earth and skies
Tumble and leap and prance and dance round the lantern.

The cows are milked; she is going home to her babe.

THE PURIFICATION

They have gone over, the god, the friend, the lover,
They have gone over.
It is growing grey now;
There comes the end of day now.

They were signs then, the stars were a glory for men,
They were signs then.
Those lights flare unseen now,
Things paltry and mean now.

They were true pleasure, the friendly trust, the praise without measure.
They were true pleasure.
Praise is an empty sound now.
Trust treads no firm ground now.

They were music, joy, and truth, the kisses she gave him in youth.
They were music, joy, and truth.
They are less beautiful now;
They are but dutiful now.

Aye, they have come to an end, the god, the lover, the friend;
They have come to an end.
The soul is alone now:
Strong, naked, full-grown now.

Frank Kendon was born in 1893 at Goudhurst, Kent, educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, and was in Egypt and Palestine during the war. Besides being a poet, he has been a schoolmaster and journalist, "a countryman by birth and youth, Londoner by necessity, poet by chance, business man for one year by fate."

Kendon's first appearance was in his section in *Poems by Four Authors* (1920). A full view of his characteristics is obtained in the succeeding *Poems and Sonnets* (1922) in which, without straining for idiomatic effects, Kendon achieves a personal distinction. He is particularly happy in his combinations of rhyme and assonance, or (as in "I spend my days vainly") in the variation of rhyming vowels and shifting consonantal sounds. Both of the lyrics here reprinted are unusually adroit pieces of technique—and both are much more than mere technical exercises.

"I SPEND MY DAYS VAINLY"

I spend my days vainly,
  Not in delight;
Though the world is elate
  And tastes her joys finely.

Here wrapped in slow musing
  Lies my dark mind,
To no music attuned
  Save its own, and despising

The lark for remoteness,
  The thrush for bold lying,
The soft wind for blowing,
  And the round sun for brightness.

O tarry for me, sweet;
I shall stir, I shall wake!
And the melody you seek
Shall be lovely, though late.

THE KERNEL

Now that the flush of summer is gone,
And in the lane no flower is seen,
No hedge in leaf,
No tree in gold or green;

Now that the golden fruit is stored,
And in the wood no song is heard,
No merry stir
Of song from any bird;

Now that the uncompanioned wind
Blows cold across the naked land
And, hung in black,
Bare trees like mourners stand;

Winter reveals through falling rain,
A strength which summer had left unseen:
Beauty and peace
Which, but for tears, had been in vain,
Which, but for loss, had never been.

Aldous Huxley

Aldous (Leonard) Huxley, grandson of Thomas Huxley, was born in 1894 at Godalming and educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. From 1919 to 1921, he was on the editorial

staff of The Athenæum and, although he has recently devoted himself entirely to prose, his first publications were in verse; his three early volumes, *The Burning Wheel* (1916), *The Defeat of Youth* (1918) and *Leda* (1920) being in that medium.

As a poet, Huxley is at least three writers. At times, he is a precise rather academic picture-maker, rhyming his subjects in the broad, traditional manner. At other times—and far more frequently—he is a disillusioned ironist, a conscious imitator of Rimbaud and Laforgue, a sardonic *pierrot lunaire.* (The latter vein is best illustrated by the poem "Male and Female Created He Them" and the bitter "Soles Occidere et Redire Possunt" in *Leda.*) More rarely, his poetry strikes the sombre note which finds its fullest expression in the novel *Antic Hay* (1923), the note of tragic despair echoing in a vast emptiness.

Besides Huxley's novels and poems, the author is well known as a writer of brilliant and experimental short stories—*vide Limbo* (1920) and *Mortal Coils* (1922)—a feuilletonist, and essayist whose occasional papers were published in 1923 under the title of *On the Margin.* If journalism and the impulse to overproduce do not engulf him, Huxley's versatility may well reveal him as one of the most significant recorders of his period.

SONG OF POPLARS

Shepherd, to yon tall poplars tune your flute:
Let them pierce keenly, subtly shrill,
The slow blue rumour of the hill;
Let the grass cry with an anguish of evening gold,
And the great sky be mute.

Then hearken how the poplar trees unfold
Their buds, yet close and gummed and blind,
In airy leafage of the mind,
Rustling in silvery whispers the twin-hued scales
That fade not nor grow old.

"Poplars and fountains and you cypress spires
Springing in dark and rusty flame,
Seek you aught that hath a name?
Or say, say: Are you all an upward agony
Of undefined desires?

"Say, are you happy in the golden march
Of sunlight all across the day?
Or do you watch the uncertain way
That leads the withering moon on cloudy stairs
Over the heaven's wide arch?

"Is it towards sorrow or towards joy you lift
The sharpness of your trembling spears?
Or do you seek, through the grey tears
That blur the sky, in the heart of the triumphing blue,
A deeper, calmer rift?"

So: I have tuned my music to the trees,
And there were voices, dim below
Their shrillness, voices swelling slow
In the blue murmur of hills, and a golden cry
And then vast silence.

FIFTH PHILOSOPHER'S SONG

A million million spermatozoa,
All of them alive:
Out of their cataclysm but one poor Noah
Dare hope to survive.

And among that billion minus one
Might have chance to be
Shakespeare, another Newton, a new Donne—
But the One was Me.

Shame to have ousted your betters thus,
  Taking ark while the others remained outside!
Better for all of us, forward Homunculus,
  If you'd quietly died!

Charles Hamilton Sorley

Charles Hamilton Sorley, who promised greater things than any of the younger poets, was born at Old Aberdeen in May, 1895. Son of Professor Sorley of Cambridge, he studied at Marlborough College and University College, Oxford. He was finishing his studies abroad and was on a walking-tour along the banks of the Moselle when the war came. Sorley returned home to receive an immediate commission in the 7th Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment. In August, 1915, at the age of 20, he was made a captain. On October 13, 1915, he was killed in action near Hulluch.

Sorley left but one book, *Marlborough and Other Poems,* a posthumous collection, edited by his father, published in 1916. The verse contained in it is sometimes rough but never rude. Although he admired Masefield, loveliness rather than liveliness was his aim. Restraint, tolerance, and a dignity unusual for a boy of twenty distinguish his poetry. There is scarcely a line in Sorley's work which does not breathe the spirit of compelling exaltation.

TWO SONNETS

I

Saints have adored the lofty soul of you.
Poets have whitened at your high renown.
We stand among the many millions who
Do hourly wait to pass your pathway down.

You, so familiar, once were strange: we tried
To live as of your presence unaware.
But now in every road on every side
We see your straight and steadfast signpost there.

I think it like that signpost in my land
Hoary and tall, which pointed me to go
Upward, into the hills, on the right hand,
Where the mists swim and the winds shriek and
blow,
A homeless land and friendless, but a land
I did not know and that I wished to know.

II

Such, such is Death: no triumph: no defeat:
Only an empty pail, a slate rubbed clean,
A merciful putting away of what has been.

And this we know: Death is not Life effete,
Life crushed, the broken pail. We who have seen
So marvellous things know well the end not yet.

Victor and vanquished are a-one in death:
Coward and brave: friend, foe. Ghosts do not say,
"Come, what was your record when you drew
breath?"
But a big blot has hid each yesterday
So poor, so manifestly incomplete.
And your bright Promise, withered long and sped,
Is touched; stirs, rises, opens and grows sweet
And blossoms and is you, when you are dead.

THE SONG OF THE UNGIRT RUNNERS

We swing ungirded hips,
And lightened are our eyes,
The rain is on our lips,
We do not run for prize.
We know not whom we trust
Nor whitherward we fare,
But we run because we must
Through the great wide air.

The waters of the seas
Are troubled as by storm.
The tempest strips the trees
And does not leave them warm.
Does the tearing tempest pause?
Do the tree tops ask it why?
So we run without a cause
'Neath the big bare sky.

The rain is on our lips,
We do not run for prize.
But the storm the water whips
And the wave howls to the skies.
The winds arise and strike it
And scatter it like sand,
And we run because we like it
Through the broad bright land.

TO GERMANY

You are blind like us. Your hurt no man designed,
And no man claimed the conquest of your land.
But gropers both, through fields of thought confined,
We stumble and we do not understand.
You only saw your future bigly planned,
And we the tapering paths of our own mind,
And in each other's dearest ways we stand,
And hiss and hate. And the blind fight the blind.

When it is peace, then we may view again
With new-won eyes each other's truer form
And wonder. Grown more loving-kind and warm
We'll grasp firm hands and laugh at the old pain,
When it is peace. But until peace, the storm,
The darkness and the thunder and the rain.

Robert Graves

Robert Graves, son of the Irish poet and song-writer Alfred Percival Graves, was born July 26, 1895. He was educated at Charterhouse and Oxford, after which he joined the British Expeditionary Force and served three times in France, in the same regiment as Siegfried Sassoon.

Graves was one of the few writers who, roused by the war and giving himself to his country, refused to glorify warfare or chant new hymns of hate. Like Sassoon, Graves also reacts against the storm of fury and blood-lust, but, fortified by a lighter and more whimsical spirit, where Sassoon is violent, Graves is volatile; where Sassoon is bitter, Graves is almost blithe.

An unconquerable gayety rises from his *Fairies and Fusiliers* (1917), a surprising and healing humor that is warmly indi-

vidual. In *Country Sentiment* (1919) Graves turns to a more rustic simplicity. But a buoyant fancy ripples beneath the most archaic of his ballads and a quaintly original turn of mind saves them from their own echoes.

The Pier Glass (1921) and *Whipperginny* (1923) are less emotional, more intellectually experimental. *Country Sentiment* was, so Graves says, "an endeavor to escape from a painful war neurosis into an Arcadia of amatory fancy. But the prevailing mood of *The Pier Glass* is aggressive and disciplinary rather than escapist." *Whipperginny,* like the succeeding *Mock Beggar Hall* (1924), is conscious, almost self-conscious philosophizing mixed with a fantasy that is both wild and delicate. Besides his poems, Graves has written two analytical—and provocative—studies: *On English Poetry* (1922) and *Poetic Unreason and other Studies* (1925).

IT'S A QUEER TIME

It's hard to know if you're alive or dead
When steel and fire go roaring through your head.

One moment you'll be crouching at your gun
Traversing, mowing heaps down half in fun:
The next, you choke and clutch at your right breast—
No time to think—leave all—and off you go . . .
To Treasure Island where the Spice winds blow,
To lovely groves of mango, quince and lime—
Breathe no good-bye, but ho, for the Red West!
It's a queer time.

You're charging madly at them yelling "Fag!"
When somehow something gives and your feet drag.
You fall and strike your head; yet feel no pain
And find . . . you're digging tunnels through the hay
In the Big Barn, 'cause it's a rainy day.

Oh, springy hay, and lovely beams to climb!
You're back in the old sailor suit again.
It's a queer time.

Or you'll be dozing safe in your dug-out—
A great roar—the trench shakes and falls about—
You're struggling, gasping, struggling, then . . . *hullo!*
Elsie comes tripping gaily down the trench,
Hanky to nose—that lyddite makes a stench—
Getting her pinafore all over grime.
Funny! because she died ten years ago!
It's a queer time.

The trouble is, things happen much too quick;
Up jump the Boches, rifles thump and click,
You stagger, and the whole scene fades away:
Even good Christians don't like passing straight
From Tipperary or their Hymn of Hate
To Alleluiah-chanting, and the chime
Of golden harps . . . and . . . I'm not well to-day . . .
It's a queer time.

A PINCH OF SALT[1]

When a dream is born in you
With a sudden clamorous pain,
When you know the dream is true
And lovely, with no flaw nor stain,
O then, be careful, or with sudden clutch
You'll hurt the delicate thing you prize so much.

[1] Compare the poem on the same theme on page 165.

Dreams are like a bird that mocks,
  Flirting the feathers of his tail.
When you seize at the salt box,
  Over the hedge you'll see him sail.
Old birds are neither caught with salt nor chaff:
They watch you from the apple bough and laugh.

Poet, never chase the dream.
  Laugh yourself, and turn away.
Mask your hunger; let it seem
  Small matter if he come or stay;
But when he nestles in your hand at last,
Close up your fingers tight and hold him fast.

I WONDER WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE DROWNED?

Look at my knees,
That island rising from the steamy seas!
The candle's a tall lightship; my two hands
Are boats and barges anchored to the sands,
With mighty cliffs all round;
They're full of wine and riches from far lands. . . .
I wonder what it feels like to be drowned?

I can make caves,
By lifting up the island and huge waves
And storms, and then with head and ears well under
Blow bubbles with a monstrous roar like thunder,
A bull-of-Bashan sound.
The seas run high and the boats split asunder . . .
I wonder what it feels like to be drowned?

The thin soap slips
And slithers like a shark under the ships.
My toes are on the soap-dish—that's the effect
Of my huge storms; an iron steamer's wrecked.
The soap slides round and round;
He's biting the old sailors, I expect. . . .
I wonder what it feels like to be drowned?

A FORCED MUSIC

Of Love he sang, full hearted one,
But when the song was done,
The King demanded more,
Ay, and commanded more.
The boy found nothing for encore,
Words, melodies—none,
Ashamed the song's glad rise and plaintive fall
Had so charmed King and Queen and all.

He sang the same verse once again
But urging less Love's pain.
With altered time and key
He showed variety,
Seemed to refresh the harmony
Of his only strain,
So still the glad rise and the plaintive fall
Could charm the King, the Queen and all.

He of his song then wearying ceased,
But was not yet released:
The Queen's request was, "More,"
And her behest was "More."

He played of random notes some score,
Then suddenly let his twangling harp down fall
And fled in tears from King and Queen and all.

LOST LOVE

His eyes are quickened so with grief,
He can watch a grass or leaf
Every instant grow; he can
Clearly through a flint wall see,
Or watch the startled spirit flee
From the throat of a dead man:
Across two counties he can hear,
And catch your words before you speak,
The woodlouse or the maggot's weak
Clamour rings in his sad ear;
And noise so slight it would surpass
Credence:—drinking sound of grass,
Worm-talk, clashing jaws of moth
Chumbling tiny holes in cloth:
The groan of ants who undertake
Gigantic loads for honour's sake,
Their sinews creak, their breath comes thin:
Whir of spiders when they spin,
And minute, whispering, mumbling, sighs
Of idle grubs and flies.
This man is quickened so with grief,
He wanders god-like or like thief
Inside and out, below, above,
Without relief seeking lost love.

Louis Golding was born in Manchester, in November, 1895, and received his early education at Manchester Grammar School. War found him in 1914, taking him to Macedonia and France, where he was chiefly occupied with educational work in various armies. On his return to England in 1919, he published his first volume of poems, *Sorrow of War,* and in the same year pursued his studies at Oxford. A succeeding collection, *Shepherd Singing Ragtime* (1921), and a novel, *Forward From Babylon* (1921) appeared while he was still an undergraduate.

The two volumes of poems appeared in America as one book entitled *Prophet and Fool* (1923). *Seacoast of Bohemia,* a satiric fantasy, followed in the same year. Since that time, Golding has travelled extensively through Europe and the Mediterranean, publishing two colorful volumes of travel, *Sunward* (1924) and *Sicilian Noon* (1925). *Day of Atonement* (1925), his latest novel, is a return to the sombre and impressive background of *Forward from Babylon.*

As a poet, Golding is gifted with a romantic, almost a rhapsodic, vision. Anger and pity find a ringing if not always controlled voice in his prose no less than in his rhymes.

PLOUGHMAN AT THE PLOUGH

He, behind the straight plough, stands
Stalwart; firm shafts in firm hands.

Naught he cares for wars and naught
For the fierce disease of thought.

Only for the winds, the sheer
Naked impulse of the year,

Only for the soil which stares
Clean into God's face, he cares.

In the stark might of his deed
There is more than art or creed;

In his wrist more strength is hid
Than the monstrous Pyramid;

Stauncher than stern Everest
Be the muscles of his breast;

Not the Atlantic sweeps a flood
Potent as the ploughman's blood.

He, his horse, his ploughshare, these
Are the only verities.

Dawn to dusk, with God he stands,
The Earth poised on his broad hands.

THE SINGER OF HIGH STATE

On hills too harsh for firs to climb,
  Where eagle dare not hatch her brood,
  On the sheer peak of Solitude,
  With anvils of black granite crude
He beats austerities of rhyme.

Such godlike stuff his spirit drinks,
  He made great odes of tempest there.
  The steel-winged eagle, if he dare
  To cleave these tracts of frozen air,
Hearing such music, swoops and sinks.

Stark tumults, which no tense night awes,
Of godly love and titan hate
Down crags of song reverberate.
Held by the Singer of High State,
Battalions of the midnight pause.

On hills uplift from Space and Time,
On the sheer peak of Solitude,
With stars to give his furnace food,
On anvils of black granite crude
He beats austerities of rhyme.

NIGHT ON THE FIELDS OF ENNA

(*Dove il sol tace.*—'Inferno')

Grass there doth not
Make reply faint as thought
To the bird-like din
Of the sun's cherubin.
And the birds themselves do
Blunder the branches through
Till the earth's root stains
With their knocked-out brains.
O the sun's silent and
Blood's on the land.
The birds die there
In the clotted air
And their wing-beats make no noise.
The four winds are lank lead
Suspended in a dead poise.
A scurf is on the mouth
Of west wind and south.

And the east and the north
Loll swollen tongues forth,
Into the blank immanence
Of the sun's silence.

Never Moloch and his peers,
Beelzebub, Ashtaroth,
So racked the cracked spheres
With the trumpets of their wrath
As this black hush hath rent
The collapsing firmament.

Dante, of thy charity
Restore sound unto sea,
Slake the winds their thirst.
Let the sun walk on
The split ramparts of this worst
Pandemonion.
Let the sun's cherubin,
Dante, once again begin
Their bird-like din.
Restore to birds their lost eyes,
To grass its little cries.

L. A. G. Strong

Leonard A. G. Strong was born on March 8, 1896, in the parish of Plympton, in Devon. "One of his parents" (to allow Mr. Strong to speak for himself) "is Irish, the other is half English and half Irish, so that he is fairly entitled to describe himself as a mongrel. He spent his childhood partly on Southern Dartmoor and partly on the borders between Dublin and Wicklow. From a preparatory school at Plymouth, he went with a scholarship to Brighton College, and thence, five years later,

won an open Classical Scholarship at Wadham College, Oxford. Illness interrupting his career, he finally graduated in 1920 and now teaches at Summer Fields, a famous preparatory school near Oxford. Delicate health has confined him to a spectator's part in his favourite sports. Swimming is the only form of violent exercise he has been able to keep up—perhaps because, as legend has it, one of his ancestors, Teig Riarach O'Dowda, King of Connaught, captured and married a mermaid, thereby endowing his descendants with a taste for the sea!"

Strong is known in America chiefly through his *Dublin Days* (1921), a small volume of shrewd appraisals, in which satire nudges characterisation. *The Lowery Road* (1923) depends for its effect less on humor and more on exaltation. Without sacrificing originality of speech, Strong summons the spirit of the English countryside in these terse Dartmoor lyrics. Besides the celebration of Strong's native Devon, the author has written poetry which is by no means local; his *Eight Poems,* privately distributed at Christmas 1923, show him to be equally successful in the higher flights. Latterly Strong has distinguished himself as one of the best compilers of anthologies of magazine verse.

RUFUS PRAYS

In the darkening church
  Where but a few had stayed
At the Litany Desk
  The idiot knelt and prayed.

Rufus, stunted, uncouth,
  The one son of his mother.
'Eh, I'd sooner 'ave Rufie,'
  She said, 'than many another:

' 'E's useful about the 'ouse,
  And so gentle as 'e can be.
An 'e gets up early o' mornin's
  And makes me a cup o' tea.'

The formal evensong
  Had passed over his head:
He sucked his thumb, and squinted,
  And dreamed, instead.

Now while the organ boomed
  To the few who still were there,
At the Litany Desk
  The idiot made his prayer:

'Gawd bless Mother,
  'N make Rufie a good lad:
Take Rufie to Heaven
  'N forgive him when 'e's bad.

' 'N early mornin's in Heaven
  'E'll make mother's tea,
'N a cup for the Lord Jesus
  'N a cup for Thee.'

ZEKE

Gnarly and bent and deaf's a pos',
Pore old Ezekiel Purvis
Goeth crippin' slowly up the 'ill
To the Commoonion Survis.

And tappy, tappy up the haisle
Goeth stick and brassy ferule:
And Passen [1] 'ath to stoopy down
An' 'oller in ees yerole.

[1] Parson.

AN OLD WOMAN, OUTSIDE THE ABBEY THEATRE

In this Theaytre they has plays
  On us, and high-up people comes
And pays to see things playin' here
  They'd run like hell from in the slums.

THE MAD WOMAN OF PUNNET'S TOWN

A-swell within her billowed skirts
  Like a great ship with sails unfurled,
The madwoman goes gallantly
  Upon the ridges of her world.

With eagle nose and wisps of gray
  She strides upon the westward hills,
Swings her umbrella joyously
  And waves it to the waving mills.

Talking and chuckling as she goes
  Indifferent both to sun and rain,
With all that merry company:
  The singing children of her brain.

LOWERY COT

This is the house where Jesse White
Run staring in one misty night,
And said he seed the Holy Ghost
Out to Lowery finger-post.

Said It rised up like a cloud
Muttering to Itself out loud,
And stood tremendous on the hill
While all the breathing world was still.

They put en shivering to bed,
And in three days the man was dead.
Gert solemn visions such as they
Be overstrong for mortal clay.

Edmund Blunden

Edmund (C.) Blunden was born in 1896, and educated at Queen's College, Oxford. During the war he served as lieutenant in the Royal Sussex Regiment, and his bucolic poems seem a direct reaction from his experiences as a soldier. In 1916 he published three small volumes of pastorals which appeared as one book, *The Waggoner and other Poems,* in 1920. In the same year, he edited, with Alan Porter, *The Poems of John Clare,* most of the verses being deciphered from a mass of old manuscript. Two years later, he published *The Shepherd* (1922).

The most casual glance at these volumes discloses the fact that Blunden's use of the pastoral note is not, as it is with some of his contemporaries, a mere literary device. Here, the verse is gnarled and twisted as the bent trees of which he loves to write; there is rude country air in his lines and even the words have the spicy smell of apple orchards. It has been objected that Blunden depends too often on unusual and obsolescent terms, but—as Robert Bridges wrote in a pamphlet on *The Dialectical Words in Blunden's Poems* (1921)—"his poetry cannot be imagined without them, and the strength and beauty of the effects must be estimated in his successes and not in his failures."

For the definitions appended to the following poems, thanks must be given to the Poet-Laureate, whose skill as etymologist cannot be overrated.

THE POOR MAN'S PIG

Already fallen plum-bloom stars the green
And apple-boughs as knarred [1] as old toads' backs
Wear their small roses ere a rose is seen;
The building-thrush watches old Job who stacks
The bright-peeled osiers on the sunny fence,
The pent sow grunts to hear him stumping by,
And tries to push the bolt and scamper thence,
But her ringed snout still keeps her to the sty.

Then out he lets her run; away she snorts
In bundling gallop for the cottage door,
With hungry hubbub begging crusts and orts,[2]
Then like a whirlwind bumping round once more;
Nuzzling the dog, making the pullets run,
And sulky as a child when her play's done.

A COUNTRY GOD

When groping farms are lanterned up
And stolchy [3] ploughlands hid in grief,
And glimmering byroads catch the drop
That weeps from sprawling twig and leaf,
And heavy-hearted spins the wind

[1] *knarred,* a word meaning "wrinkled," is a country-cousin to our "gnarled."

[2] *orts* are fragments or scraps of refuse.

[3] *stolchy* is such an excellent onomatopoetic word that it scarcely needs explanation. But there is an old English verb *stolch:* "to tread down in wet land or mud."

Among the tattered flags of Mirth,—
Then who but I flit to and fro,
With shuddering speech, with mope and mow,
And glass the eyes of earth?

Then haunt I by some moaning brook
Where lank and snaky brambles swim,
Or where the hill pines swartly look
I whirry [1] through the dark and hymn
A dull-voiced dirge and threnody,
An echo of the sad world's drone
That now appals the friendly stars—
O wail for blind brave youth, whose wars
Turn happiness to stone.

How rang the cavern-shades of old
To my melodious pipes, and then
My bright-haired bergomask patrolled
Each lawn and plot for laughter's din:
Never a sower flung broadcast,
No hedger brished [2] nor scythesman swung,
Nor maiden trod the purpling press,
But I was by to guard and bless
And for their solace sung.

. . . . .

But now the sower's hand is writhed
In livid death, the bright rhythm stolen,
The gold grain flatted and unscythed,
The boars in the vineyard, gnarled and sullen,
Havocking the grapes; and the pouncing wind

[1] *whirry* is another sound-word, not to be confused with "worry." It means "to fly rapidly with noise"—a combination of "whir" and "hurry."

[2] *brished* is country dialect for "brush"—principally used in connection with trimming trees and hedges.

Spins the spattered leaves of the glen
In a mockery dance, death's hue-and-cry;
With all my murmurous pipes flung by
And summer not to come again.

THE BARN

Rain-sunken roof, grown green and thin
For sparrows' nests and starlings' nests;
Dishevelled eaves; unwieldy doors,
Cracked rusty pump, and oaken floors,
And idly-pencilled names and jests
Upon the posts within.

The light pales at the spider's lust,
The wind tangs [1] through the shattered pane:
An empty hop-poke spreads across
The gaping frame to mend the loss
And keeps out sun as well as rain,
Mildewed with clammy dust.

The smell of apples stored in hay
And homely cattle-cake is there.
Use and disuse have come to terms,
The walls are hollowed out by worms,
But men's feet keep the mid-floor bare
And free from worse decay.

[1] *tangs*—an old term (differing from our word meaning "taste") denoting a barb or a sting. Blunden uses it here as a verb.

All merry noise of hens astir
Or sparrows squabbling on the roof
Comes to the barn's broad open door;
You hear upon the stable floor
Old hungry Dapple strike his hoof,
And the blue fan-tail's whir.

The barn is old, and very old,
But not a place of spectral fear.
Cobwebs and dust and speckling sun
Come to old buildings every one.
Long since they made their dwelling here,
And here you may behold

Nothing but simple wane and change;
Your tread will wake no ghost, your voice
Will fall on silence undeterred.
No phantom wailing will be heard,
Only the farm's blithe cheerful noise;
The barn is old, not strange.

Sacheverell Sitwell

Sacheverell Sitwell, brother of Edith and Osbert Sitwell, was born in 1897 at Scarborough and educated at Eton. As soon as he was of military age, he joined the Grenadier Guards as second lieutenant. After the war he attended Balliol College, Oxford, for a short time, but came to London before completing his courses, and devoted himself to literature.

From the first, his poetry was experimental and sharply individualized—even the early *The People's Palace* containing his particular gesture. *The Hundred and One Harlequins* (1922) and *The Thirteenth Cæsar* (1924) are less dependent on his influences, although the accents of such dissimilar poets as Vachel Lindsay and T. S. Eliot arise from his pages. Here the

youngest of the Sitwells displays a lively imagination, a delight in toying with the subject as well as distorting it, a glittering if sometimes too self-conscious cleverness. He has yet to express fully the emotional values which his esoteric lines only suggest; he is, as yet, neither subtle nor sensuous enough. But his more recent verse seems to indicate that he will achieve the decorative order which distinguishes his extraordinarily keen appraisal, *Southern Baroque Art* (1924).

FOUNTAINS[1]

This night is pure and clear as thrice refinèd silver.
Silence, the cape of Death, lies heavy
Round the bare shoulders of the hills.
Faint throbs and murmurs
At moments growing to a mutter, then subsiding,
Fill the night with mystery and panic.
The honey-tongued arguings of fountains
Stir the air with flutes and gentle voices.

The graven fountain-masks suffer and weep—
Curved with a smile, the poor mouths
Clutch at a half-remembered song
Striving to forget the agony of ever laughing,—
Laughing while they hear the secrets
Echoed from the depths of Earth beneath them.

This half-remembered song—
This flow of sad-restrainèd laughter
Jars with the jets of youthful water
Springing from the twisted masks,
For this is but the birth of water;
And singing joyfully

[1] Compare the poem on the same subject on page 332.

It springs upon the world
And wanders ceaselessly
Along its jeweled valleys to the sea,
Rattling like rolls of drums
The shells and pebbles down its bed.

The endless argument of water ceases,
A few drops fall heavily, splashing on the marble:
A Sultan with his treasures
Seeking to gain the goodwill of his love,
Pouring before her chains of crackling pearls
And weeping heavy jealous tears
Because she will not heed him.

THE RED-GOLD RAIN

(*Orange Tree by Day*)

Sun and rain at work together
Ripened this for summer weather;
Sun gave it colour tawny red
And rain its life as though it bled;
In the long days full of fire
Its fruit will cool us when we tire.
Against the house-wall does it grow
With smooth stem like a fountain's flow,
Dark are its leaves, a colder shade
Than ever rock or mountain made;
When the wind plays soft they sing,
For here the birds' songs never ring,
Quite still the fruit that in a golden shower
Will fall one day to flood this tower.

'PSITTACHUS EOIS IMITATRIX ALES AB INDIS'—*Ovid*

The parrot's voice snaps out—
No good to contradict—
What he says he'll say again:
Dry facts, like biscuits,—

His voice and vivid colours
Of his breast and wings
Are immemorably old;
Old dowagers dressed in crimpèd satin
Boxed in their rooms
Like specimens beneath a glass
Inviolate—and never changing,
Their memory of emotions dead;
The ardour of their summers
Sprayed like camphor
On their silken parasols
Intissued in a cupboard.

Reflective, but with never a new thought
The parrot sways upon his ivory perch—
Then gravely turns a somersault
Through rings nailed in the roof—
Much as the sun performs his antics
As he climbs the aerial bridge
We only see
Through crystal prisms in a falling rain.

Edgell Rickword was born October 22, 1898, and, before he was twenty, contributed to "Oxford Poetry." His first volume, *Behind the Eyes* (1921), gives evidence of a talent whose visual sensibility matches a delicately precise mind. After a series of reviews for "The New Statesman," Rickword published his excellent study of the remarkable French boy-poet *Rimbaud* (1924), and a volume, *New Poems,* is in preparation.

INTIMACY

Since I have seen you do those intimate things
That other men but dream of; lull asleep
The sinister dark forest of your hair,
And tie the bows that stir on your calm breast
Faintly as leaves that shudder in their sleep.
Since I have seen your stocking swallow up,
A swift black wind, the pale flame of your foot,
And deemed your slender limbs so meshed in silk
Sweet mermaid sisters drowned in their dark hair,
I have not troubled overmuch with food,
And wine has seemed like water from a well;
Pavements are built of fire, grass of thin flames.
All other girls grow dull as painted flowers
Or flutter harmlessly like coloured flies
Whose wings are tangled in the net of leaves
Spread by frail trees that grow behind the eyes.

Ida Graves (no relation to Robert Graves) was born in India in 1902 of Scotch and Irish parents. She came to England in 1907, spent nine defiant years in an old-fashioned school which she hated, and in 1918 went to a "self-government" Quaker school, where she began to write poetry "under the stimulus of its creative environment."

It was only after her marriage that she began to model in clay, but her gifts as sculptress are evident even in her tiny lyrics. These are chiselled with economy and grace of line.

CONVERSATION

If Ida held a tryst to-day
With the dim dead in some deep wood
Where trees and briars spread their hood,
She would call William Blake away
With her raised hand; Massacio
Would from the whispering spirits go,
And Michelangelo might follow
Them into the green wood's hollow.

There would they speak delightedly
Of the body's bright solidity,
The stretch of limbs, the strength and poise
Of marble-bodied Grecian boys,
Of Adam perfect from the clod,
Of the firm anatomy of God.
With thinking hands on shapeless clay
What might not Ida do to-day?

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